

THE *12611*
HISTORIES
Of SOME of the
PENITENTS
IN THE
MAGDALEN-HOUSE,
AS

Supposed to be related by Themselves.

In Magdalen Hospital
In TWO VOLUMES.

In the corrupted Currents of this World,
Offence's gilded Hand may shove by Justice :
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked Prize itself
Buys out the Laws : But 'tis not so Above ;
THERE is no shuffling ; THERE the Action lies
In his true Nature ; and we ourselves compell'd,
Ev'n to the Teeth and Forehead of our Faults,
'To give in Evidence. What then ? What rests ?
'Try what REPENTANCE can : What can it not ?

SHAKESPEAR.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

Printed for P. WILSON, and J. POTTS, in *Dame Street*,

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P R E F A C E.

SOME apology may be judged necessary for a work which assumes real characters, tho' in the title-page it acknowledges itself to be a fiction.

I have not indeed made free with the names of any of the Penitents; for tho' some may imagine, that little ceremony is requisite towards persons who have broke thro' all the forms of decency, and decorums of virtue, yet I cannot apprehend that *that* gives me a title to endeavour to bring those again on the stage of the world, who have, for so good a reason, retired from it: But I may perhaps be thought by others to have gone too far in making my imaginary persons assume *their* characters; and if I can find any excuse for myself, it must be in the *motives* which induced me to do so.

My first aim in the following work was to plead the cause of the Penitents in the Magdalen-House, who by many are represented as persons too intirely abandoned to guilt and infamy, to deserve relief, to which surely distress alone is a sufficient

title. Judgment is not intrusted with us: 'Every man must stand or fall to his own master.' Shall We be more rigid than HE who knoweth the heart, and hath a right to our obedience? "He maketh his sun to shine on the just and on the unjust." Virtue alone can merit our esteem; but misery deserves our pity, and indigence may claim our bounty.

Tho' the profession of a prostitute is the most despicable and hateful that imagination can form; yet the individuals are frequently worthy objects of compassion; and I am willing to believe, that if people did but reflect on the various stratagems used at first to corrupt them, while poverty often, and still oftener vanity, is on the side of the corruptor, they would smooth the stern brow of rigid virtue, and turn the contemptuous frown into tears of pity.

Tho' I do not pretend the following stories to be real facts, yet I think every one will see so plainly, that the incidents are not only probable, but such as must frequently have happened, as may lead them to acknowledge, that the first step into that way of life oftener proceeds from weakness than from vice; and that if the beginning of their misfortunes, or rather their crimes, have been owing to a want of steadiness in themselves in the practice of virtue, many of their subsequent vices have arisen from the affectation of too overstrained a chastity in others, who, unlike their Maker, ever ready to accept the repentant sinner, and to heal the contrite heart, exclude them from the means of reformation, by hunting them out of every way of obtaining an honest subsistence, till the only alternative left them, is, either to owe their support to a continuance in vicious courses, or to die martyrs to chastity:

A mar-

A martyrdom, which, I fear, many of their severest censurers would find difficult; and yet, surely, to none can it be so hard, as to those whose consciences are burdened with a heavy crime; for "the sting of death is sin." Therefore, to them it must appear with accumulated horrors; and despair will drive them into an increase of guilt, to avoid so early an appearance before the Judgment-Seat, from whence is no appeal.

Example affects more than precept; the latter piques our pride, the former interests our passions on its side. This known truth suggested to me the form of the following work; and if, by relating a series of probable events, I shall incline any woman so effectually to pity the frailty of one of her own sex, as to forgive the past, and enable the offender to efface her guilt by sincere repentance and a blameless life; if, I say, I can do this, I shall esteem myself extremely happy; nor shall I repine at the time I have bestowed on the following sheets, if I can only so far soften the obdurately virtuous, as to induce them to forbear the cruel endeavour of casting an odium on an institution which does so much honour to the present age; which will reflect never-fading glory on those who instituted it; and which will purchase for them rewards, that shall exist when time shall be no more.

That there can be no objects so miserable, consequently so deserving of compassion, as those for whose relief this institution is designed, is surely past dispute. I confess it is beyond the reach of my imagination to conceive a state of such absolute wretchedness as that of the prostitute. In most conditions, from the vicissitude of all worldly events, as prosperity is chequered

with some painful hours, and for a time obscured by unavoidable afflictions, so wretchedness is interrupted by casual blessings, and its gloom enlivened by some gleams of joy. But the prostitute's life is divided between surfeiting riot, penury, disease, and infamy; continual transitions from one extreme to another, each almost equally distant from real happiness; surrounded with a variety of distresses here, and on the brink of eternal misery hereafter; their lives are a continual progression from one crime to another, and their deaths, in every circumstance, too horrible to relate.

Yet many appear unwilling to draw them out of this state of wretchedness; they shrink with horror at the mention of people so criminal, and hate them for the vices which should inspire us with a most ardent desire for their reformation. Were they less wicked, they would be less fit objects of compassion, and less require amendment.

A Being infinitely pure and perfect, was moved to pity by the sins of his creatures: Shall We then, whose offences are numberless, refuse our pardon and assistance to those, who may not more properly be termed fellow-creatures, than fellow-sinners, because their offences are of a deeper dye than our own? especially as the different degrees in which we rank our guilt and theirs may possibly proceed from self partiality: For if we take into our account their superior temptations, and inferior advantages towards the repressing them, the balance may not, to an All-seeing eye, appear in our favour. But if we are conscious of a real superiority in merit, let us be thankful to Him who gave it us, and by whom we have been preserved in that path
wherein

wherein He first inclined us to walk; and while we lend our help to our stumbling fellow-creatures, let us petition Him who can turn the human heart, and change the will, to vouchsafe to guide them, during the remainder of their lives, in the road that leads to present peace, and future bliss. Let us not, by mean exultation, lose the benefit of our superior happiness; but rather increase our own, by imparting a portion of it to them; and not endanger our souls by pride, after having preserved them from sensuality.

The frivolous objections raised against the institution itself, have not given me much less concern. I have always been inclined to indulge an opinion, not peculiar to myself, that every one esteems virtue, tho' temptations may lead them to neglect the practice of it; and that both from the secret suggestions of conscience, and the desire of being thought to approve what is highly praise-worthy, no one would deny to merit its just tribute of praise: But the institution of the Magdalen-House has taught me, that this debt is often paid with an unwilling mind, and withheld as long as a possibility of cavilling at it remains.

Those who dare not boldly refuse their approbation to benevolence, with timid treachery endeavour to conceal their want of it, under objections, which, tho' void of force, since they are contrary to truth, still afford a lurking-place where malevolence hopes to hide itself, while it hangs forth the colours of prudence and sagacity, and sometimes assumes the name of rigid virtue. These pretend to fear, that this institution will prove an encouragement to vice, by offering the vicious an asylum: But this scarcely deserves an answer, being sufficiently confuted by this only

consideration ; that to be one of its inhabitants is certainly less eligible to a woman, who does not want to hide her head from shame, than the commonest service ; and that to a person still viciously, or even gaily inclined, it would be the most dismal prison.

Others urge the improbability of a reformation. To amend the human heart, in opposition to its own inclinations, is indeed a difficult task ; but whoever applies to this House, must, as far as their desire goes, and that is almost the whole way, be reformed already. If they are not led there by remorse, and some remains of unextinguished virtue, they are at least driven by a desire to seek shelter from the hatefulness of vice, or the horrors of its attendant miseries. Either motive is sufficient to reform the life, while secluded from temptation, and secured from distress and insult ; and tho' they are brought thither, not by sorrow for their sins, but for the consequences of them ; yet when every distraction from reflexion, and every impediment to conviction, is removed, the whisperings of conscience will be heard ; and she, whose design extended no farther than the reformation of her conduct, will find her heart amended, and, from a decent behaviour, will proceed to purity of mind.

An earnest desire after a thorough change of life can only induce persons to ask for admission into a place where every hour is spent in the utmost contrariety to their former practices. I need not urge, that the charms of decency, the sober satisfaction arising from regularity of conduct, and the delights of virtue, must win upon the heart, since their inclinations appear already fixed ; and it is highly improbable that they
should

should decline in a place where every thing is calculated for their increase.

I have met with some who ridicule the Magdalen-House as a fruitless undertaking, on a supposition that it is intended as a prevention of the vice to which it owes its inhabitants; and indeed, if, contrary to all reason, they imagine this to be the design of the institution, they may well apprehend it will prove useless.

I fear that is a vice which can never be suppressed, while he, who seduces a woman into guilt and shame, and abandons her to disease and poverty, obtains no other appellation by such villainy, than that of a man of gallantry; while he may be called a man of honour, tho' he breaks thro' ties of truth, faith, and humanity, in the destruction of one, whose greatest weakness was believing him incapable of the villainy to which she falls a sacrifice; too late perceiving, that the only charm he found in innocence, was the means it gave him to effect its ruin, by its unsuspecting credulity.

If the man who lives in the open profession of a sin, which is one of the most pernicious to society, and the most destructive to his own soul; for we are assured upon divine authority, that 'no such shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;' if such a man shall be caressed by his own sex, whose rights he is ever ready to invade, and admired by the other, whose temporal and eternal destruction are his constant aim; can we wonder that he goes on, in uninterrupted schemes, to add to the measure of his iniquity; and to increase the number of wretches, whose souls and bodies are to be sacrificed to his dissolute principles, or meaner vanity?

The laws reach only part of the crimes which disturb society ; public censure and discountenance is a punishment in which every one may be judge and executioner ; and were they properly inflicted, would prove most powerful towards effecting a general reformation ; but while we spend all our censure on folly, which should only excite our compassion, and suffer vice, the proper object of hatred and contempt, to escape with impunity, if it has rank and fortune to support it, we cannot hope to see the successfully wicked reclaimed. All that the best man can do, is, as far as possible, to repair the ravages *others* commit ; and to endeavour to bring back to peace those souls whom *they* have involved in all the depths of misery.

This is the noble design of the institutors of the Magdalen-House : “ They have been eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ;” for they have dissipated the worst of blindness, that of the mind ; they have let in upon it the light of truth ; and led the wavering wandering steps into the paths of peace and virtue. “ They have delivered the poor that cried, and those who had none to help them ; the cause that they knew not, they have searched out. When the ear heareth them, it shall bless them ; and when the eye seeth them, it shall witness to them.” To whom can it more properly be said at the great and tremendous day of judgment, “ I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me :” For inasmuch as these acts of humanity are done to the meanest of his creatures, we are assured
our

our merciful Creator will accept them as done to Himself.

No person will dispute the use of Hospitals which are instituted for the relief of corporal distempers; but of much higher benefit is that intended to heal the soul; and not only to abate temporary pains, but to save from eternal torments.

Amongst the greatest nation the world ever saw, the preservation of the life of a citizen was judged an action deserving public honour, and a crown was placed on the head of him who had thus merited the thanks of the republic. How much greater reward might these gentlemen justly claim; for they at once preserve great numbers from a pernicious life, and an untimely death, and, by restoring them to industry and order, render them useful members of society?

With disinterested joy I behold their great desert, while I can only, at an humble distance, pray for their success, and please myself with hopes, that they will receive such contributions, as shall enable them to extend their charity to all who shall desire to partake of the benefits it offers.

And now, gentle reader; for gentle I must wish you to be, that from your good nature I may hope for a favourable reception of the following imperfect sheets; after I have declared that my design has been to write in defence of Penitents, give me leave to say, that I shall esteem myself peculiarly happy, if I can have any share in preventing one person from standing in need of penitence. To instruct, as well as to amuse, should be the highest ambition of the species of writers, among whom, by this attempt, I have ranked myself.

Many have given directions to the world how to read history; nor have the other branches of
learning

learning been left without rules for the method of turning them to greater advantage. If I may be permitted to be so methodical, upon that species of writing which seems generally to owe its rise to the wild wanderings of the wildest of things, the imagination; I will venture to give directions for reading of Novels.

Every fable has its moral. If Æsop could make birds and beasts teach by their actions, can we suppose those of mankind are not equally intelligible and instructive? Though the facts be imaginary, the consequences drawn from them may be real; not only every story, but every incident, should have its moral; and that so obvious, that an observing mind shall readily perceive it.

The method therefore that I would recommend to those who apply themselves to this sort of reading, is, to attend to the Moral as much as to the Story. If in history our thoughts reach no farther than the facts, or in books of reasoning we stop at the first principles, not attending to the consequences arising from the one, nor the arguments deducible from the other, the mind will only resemble an index: It may prove of some use to those whose reflexions are less circumscribed, but can never contain any knowledge in itself. To such a reader, Livy or Tacitus can give no greater improvement than the Seven champions of Christendom, or the wonderful adventures of Guy Earl of Warwick: The degree of probability in facts, is of no importance to those, whose thoughts never extend to the causes or the consequences.

Novels should be wrote and read as books which are to teach by illustrating the moral by the facts, where precept is enlivened by examples,

ples, and imagination brought in to strengthen reason, not to confound it. If the writer loses sight of this design, still the reader may, if he pleases, keep it always in view; tho' such novels as require much effort in the mind to discover a good moral in them are certainly very pernicious; for works of imagination are fit only for the entertainment of an idle hour; when we should do by the reader, as indulgent parents act by their children, teach them in play, and blend instruction so closely with amusement, that the design shall be scarcely perceivable to the mind in that childish state of inactivity.

In defence of the following work I must observe, that I do not, under the term Amusement, include only that gaiety which plays on the imagination; for what interests the passions amuses the mind, however melancholy the subjects; and we are not less entertained at a tragedy, than at the more lively productions of the comic muse.

As these sort of books are most likely to fall into the hands of persons to whom fashionable dissipations leave little leisure for the perusal of any thing more serious, it is not blameable to wish, tho' it may be presumptuous to hope, that any thing They shall find in this performance may warn them against giving way to the emotions of vanity; indulging the first step of indiscretion; or suffering their good principles to be erased by the dissolute or careless practices of others: But should it prove so fortunate, the author will, from a trifling labour, receive a satisfaction, which would not be dearly purchased by the application of a whole life.



THE
HISTORIES
Of SOME of the
PENITENTS
IN THE
MAGDALEN-HOUSE.



CHAP. I.

Let my tears thank you ; for I cannot speak :

And if I could,——

Words were not made to vent such thoughts, as
mine.

DRYDEN.

THE pleasure every one finds in talking of
themselves, may serve to convince us,
that so many persons as seek refuge in the Mag-
dalen-House from guilt and infamy, cannot for-
bear

bear giving some account to each other of their past actions, especially as they will contain much variety and adventure. That they must thereby call to remembrance all their distresses, is no reason against it; for we daily see people more inclined to dwell on the relation of their misfortunes, than on the happier events of their lives. Whether it proceeds from the satisfaction they receive in reflecting that the storm is over, or from the desire of being pitied, which seems implanted in our natures, He only, who knows all the springs of the human mind, can tell. That these penitents must by this means publish their own infamy, is as small an impediment; for that is sufficiently known by their being there; and their hearers have none of that obdurate virtue, which makes people not know how to pity weaknesses they never felt: All are in much the same state, tho' brought to it by different steps.

We have had examples of females, whose frailty has not been accompanied with half the extenuating circumstances that these persons can alledge, yet have blazoned forth their crimes to a world, part of which, innocent of the like, must blame; and still a greater part, who having been more private, tho' not more virtuous, will certainly censure loudly, when they see,

—“ Each fair advance,
“ The luscious heroine of her own romance.”

But in the society which I am speaking of, the case is different; Each looks on the other with an eye of pity: Equal distress, and equal relief, beget a sort of mutual affection; while their
hearts

hearts overflow with gratitude to their noble benefactors, (noble, if not by blood or descent, intrinsically so from the generous benevolence of their worthy hearts) they rejoice not only in their own deliverance, but in that of all they behold; and, sufficiently humbled by former misery, they relate with compunction, from hearts overcharged with the remembrance of past wretchedness, and the comforts of present ease; not with vanity, like those I have mentioned, who exult more in their number of conquests, than blush at having themselves been so often conquered; and are more vain of their beauty, than ashamed of their vice.

When but a small number had flown for refuge to this blessed asylum, they were one evening sitting together, after the work of the day was past, when one of them turning towards the youngest in company, who had long sat silent, observed that tears trickled gently down her cheeks. This young woman was not twenty years old; her person was extremely elegant, her hands and arms finely turned, her neck white as alabaster, and exquisitely formed. Her face expressed all the humble modesty of a Madona, with a countenance languishingly sweet. The young woman who observed her, asked, what sorrow could reach her in that comfortable retreat? "for here," continued she, "what can we grieve for, except it be our sins? and such grief is accompanied with consolation, as it brings with it a hope of pardon, and a satisfaction in thinking we are come to a necessary sense of our own guilt, the first step to repentance."

'You mistake the cause of my emotions,' replied the young woman: 'Mine were not tears
' of

' of sorrow, but of joy and gratitude. When
 ' I beheld with what content, and innocence,
 ' that necessary ingredient to content, we sat here
 ' surrounded with all the comforts of this life,
 ' and all the assistances requisite to bring us to
 ' the blessings of the next, and compared it
 ' with the wretchedness from whence I was
 ' redeemed by it; my heart overflowed with
 ' gratitude to our excellent benefactors, who,
 ' like our blessed Lord, come as physicians to
 ' the sick, and call sinners, not the righteous,
 ' to repentance; who offer rest and refresh-
 ' ment to all those that are heavy laden with
 ' their miseries. From these worthy instru-
 ' ments of divine mercy, my grateful thoughts
 ' rose to Him who is the Author of all good-
 ' ness, and consequently inspired them with
 ' this charitable intention; till oppressed with
 ' my own sensations, they found some vent in
 ' tears, and wore the appearance of sorrow.'

' The liveliness of your gratitude,' replied
 the other, ' reproaches me for want of sensi-
 ' bility, who ought to feel so much more, and
 ' yet appear less affected. But my heart is for
 ' ever full, and how should it be otherwise?
 ' for I have suffered some years more of
 ' wretchedness than you can have done, who
 ' I imagine have scarcely seen your twentieth
 ' year.'

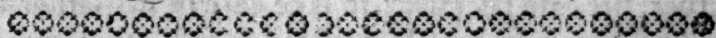
" You are right as to my age," answered
 the young woman, " but I am old in misery.
 " Were I to measure my years by the pangs I
 " have felt, my life would appear of an ante-
 " diluvian length."

' Your misfortunes must have begun early in-
 ' deed,' said a third, ' and seem peculiarly
 ' affecting; they excite the curiosity of those
 ' who

who have enough to employ their thoughts at home, without concerning themselves about others; for idleness of mind is generally the parent of curiosity; but for all this, I confess myself curious.'

Many others expressing the same curiosity, the young woman told them she would not refuse to gratify them : If any thing she could say would withdraw their thoughts from themselves, it might be some relief, as we seldom feel other people's misfortunes so severely as our own.

Accordingly she proceeded, as the next chapter will shew.



CHAPTER II.

How happy is the harmless country maid !
Who, rich by nature, scorns superfluous aid :
Whose modest cloaths no wanton eyes invite,
But, like her soul, preserve the native white :
Whose little store her well-taught mind does please,
Not pinch'd with want, nor clogg'd with wanton ease
Who, free from storms, which on the great ones fall,
Makes but few wishes, and enjoys them all.

ROSCOMMON.

MY father was a clergyman in the West of England. He served two curacies and one living; all which together did not bring him in 100*l.* per annum; but entirely engrossed his time, as he endeavoured to do his duty in each parish, to the utmost of his power,

power, and obliged him to be at the expence of keeping a horse. This, with the continual repairs necessary to his parsonage house, which was much decayed, and the ill state of health wherewith my mother was afflicted for many years, made his income but barely sufficient for himself and his family, tho' it was not large; for of many children my mother bore him, one elder sister and myself only lived to grow up.

When I was near fourteen years old, my mother died, which occasioned my sister's return home. She had spent three years with an aunt, who was a millener in a large town in that county; but, by the loss of my mother, became necessary to take care of my father's family, whose health declined so fast, that nursing him was her chief employ.

In a little more than a year, we lost my father; a great misfortune to us both, but particularly to me, who was thus left to my own guidance and support, when I was but fifteen. My appearance indeed was womanly; I had been bred up in religious principles, but at that age they could not be deeply grounded, nor so fixed as to stand against the temptations of the world, into which I was now thrown.

My father's effects, when sold and all accounts settled, yielded us but a few pounds. My aunt was dead, and we had no near relation who could assist us; but a Lady in the neighbourhood, who had always professed a great regard for my father, called upon us, when the first agonies of our grief were so far over, as to enable us to perceive the forlornness of our situation.

My

My sister applied to this Lady for her protection for me, for whom she was most uneasy; being, as she said, able to provide for her own support; but my youth and person, which perhaps she beheld with partial eyes, filled her with apprehensions for me.

The Lady assured us she would do her utmost to serve me; that if she had no sons, or I was less handsome, she would receive me into her house; but that was now impossible: however, she would enquire among all her friends, if she could find any thing proper for me, and hoped to succeed before we were obliged to quit the house.

This Lady was as good as her word; and not being so much afraid for other people's sons as for her own, she prevailed with a Lady of her acquaintance, who lived in the next county, to receive me as her woman. She had suffered me to assist in the dressing of her daughters several times, that I might be qualified for my place; and at the time appointed, gave me a letter of recommendation, to secure me still a better reception.

To take leave of my sister, was like losing my only parent; for such she was to me, tho' not above five years older than myself: I think I could not have felt much deeper affliction for her death, our separation appearing to us not much less grievous. I was frightened at the thought of going amongst entire strangers, and into a new employ; and my sister's apprehensions were such as were but too well verified in the sequel. She spent the last day we were together in warning me against the temptations which would perhaps fall in my way; of which I remember the following words were

were part, for they made a strong impression, tho' to little purpose; and the misfortunes into which I fell from disregarding them, fixed them stronger in my mind.

'My dear Emily,' said she, 'I cannot fear for your honesty, or sincerity, tho' I have said so much on those subjects. Your nature is superior to any offences of this kind; but my apprehensions are numerous in another respect. I would not attempt to tell you, you are not handsome; our own eyes in such particulars give us sufficient evidence, and we seldom doubt their truth; besides, the less persuaded you are of this, the more you will be pleased with those who tell it you, which all will be ready to do. Such a person as yours, in your situation, will attract many admirers; for while the one charms, the other will excite hopes; which I would flatter myself will be disappointed; but I confess my apprehensions arise as much from the tenderness of your heart, as from the snares that will be laid in your way. If that does not betray you, all the rest may be easily baffled: but what can I say that will steel your heart with indifference! Alas! it is above my power: He only who made it can correct it. To him, my dearest Emily, you must apply; and bear constantly in mind, that your present and eternal happiness depend on the proper regulation of your affections.'

Advice to this purpose she repeated the whole day, with many tears, and anxious prayers for my preservation.

The next morning parted us, never to meet again with so much satisfaction, melancholy as that last interview appeared to us.

One day's journey brought me to the house of Lady Markland, my new Mistress. I was immediately introduced into the parlour, where she then was sitting with Sir George Markland her husband, their son Mr. Markland, a young gentleman of about twenty-five years old, and another Lady and Gentleman who were then with them on a visit. My confusion was so great, I was scarcely able to answer the questions she put to me, or even to deliver the letter with which I was charged.

While her Ladyship was perusing the epistle, my distress increased; for the rest of the company fixed their eyes so entirely upon me, that I could find no place for my own, and began to think the questions which had before distressed me, were a great relief, in having taken my attention. I have reason to believe the Lady took compassion on me; for she called me to her, asked me how I had performed my journey, and such sort of questions as seemed to have no other intention but to encourage me; then, turning to Lady Markland, said, "I perceive, Madam, you are not of a jealous disposition."

"No indeed," replied her Ladyship, "but if I was, it would be no reason why I should be plagued with an ugly face about me; for Sir George must see handsome ones abroad, if I suffered none but Hottentots at home."

This short dialogue increased my confusion; and no words ever sounded more acceptable than the orders Lady Markland gave to the servant who introduced me, to shew me to her house-keeper.

This house-keeper was one who had lived a great many years in the family, and, as I afterwards

wards found, was held in great estimation. She understood all the necessary parts of a house-keeper's office, and none better than flattery; which, perhaps, gave a great charm to her other qualifications, for she was not without defects. Tho' she was an useful director in the kitchen, and an assiduous watch over the other servants, yet her first attachment was to her own interest, of which she was never neglectful. She was no bigot to truth; and in her Lady's absence, made herself amends for the flattery she thought proper to bestow on her before her face; falling as much short of what she deserved at one time, as she went beyond it at another. Nor did she excel more in chastity than in other virtues; for she had for some years been suspected of an intrigue with Sir George's valet-de-chambre; but being both thought excellent servants, it was winked at, tho' all the family were certain that it was well known to their master and lady. Indeed, being often present when they conversed freely, I found they made a jest of it, not from disbelief, but from thinking it of no consequence.

This greatly shocked me at first; and the familiarities between these two lovers, who were my only companions at meals and on evenings, were very distressing; however, as they gave me reason to think my absence would not be disagreeable, I sat with them as little as I could.

C H A P. III.

Love gives esteem, and then he gives desert ;
 He either finds equality, or makes it :
 Like death, he knows no difference in degrees,
 But plains and levels all. DRYDEN.

MY Lady was very good-natured and indulgent to all her servants, and to me among the rest ; tho' I had no hopes of becoming a favourite, when I saw, by her house-keeper's practice, how much she loved flattery. She would often say, when I omitted an opportunity of imitating her, that I was dull ; and sometimes, that she fancied I could think nothing commendable in any one but myself ; but all this without any bitterness.

I seldom saw Sir George, but in his Lady's presence ; he would often talk to me and compliment me, called me Lady Markland's Venus ; and when I entered the room, would cry, Here comes your goddess, my dear ; but all with so much mirth, and so little design, that in time I learnt not to mind it, and answered to the name of Venus, as readily as to that of Emily.

Mr. Markland was much less free, but more attentive ; he treated me with such respect, that his mother would sometimes tell him, she believed he thought I was a goddess in reality. He would answer, that a fine woman was a better thing ; that no situation in life should make a man fail in politeness to one of the

other sex ; and that really there was a modesty in my appearance, which was truly respectable. These sort of compliments he would make me before his parents ; and often gave the conversation such a turn, as afforded him opportunities of applying others to me by his eyes, which were unobserved by every one else. He found excuses to come into the house-keeper's room, where he would rally her and her lover on their mutual passion, taking occasion from it to vent some libertine sentiments, wherein they were sure to second him ; and sometimes to behave with a tenderness and gallantry to me, which I ought with shame to say, rather alarmed than offended me ; so little was I the better for my sister's good advice.

I wrote her an account of all the family into which I had entered ; but at first, for fear of increasing her apprehensions, and afterwards from the conscious weakness of my own heart, did not tell her how very amiable Mr. Markland was, both in person and manner ; in both of which he has seldom been equalled ; nor of his addresses to me. But I communicated to her one circumstance, which surprized me ; That were it not that they sometimes attended the parish church on Sundays, I should not know whether the family I lived in was Jew, Mahometan, or Christian ; for there was never any sign of worship among them. I never heard the name of a Superior Being uttered, but as a word of course, or by way of strengthening an assertion. While the Gentleman and Lady I have mentioned remained there, cards employed the Sundays as regularly as the other days ; and when they failed to do so after their departure, it was for want of a party.

I was

I was much surprized at a manner of life, which I thought could be found only amongst the reprobate; whereas Sir George and my Lady appeared universally respected; she behaved with good humour to her servants, and he with humanity to his tenants; that is, he did not require more of them than they could possibly pay, and chose rather to turn them out of their farms, than support them in gaol. In short, they committed no vices, and had constitutional good-nature; their characters might be well drawn by negatives; but as for positive virtues, they thought them unnecessary; they would declare they never did any harm, and did all the good they could: A strong assertion, and difficult to be made good by the best people: For as every action is an example to somebody, and has numerous consequences, many that the actor esteems innocent, will prove pernicious. Thus Sir George and my Lady, by winking at the intrigues of their servants, and speaking lightly of religion and virtue, banished both from their family, and became not only answerable for their own faults, but for those which their examples encouraged in their domestics.

My sister was as much vexed with the account I sent her of the family, as I was surprized at what I related. She wrote me word she wished me in a worse place, if I had but a better example. She had been taken into a millener's shop in town, where her aunt had lived, and where her conduct had recommended her.

I had not been above a month at Sir George's, before Mr. Markland began to make real love to me; he took every opportunity of finding me alone, which my practice of avoiding the house-keeper's room rendered more easy. I was sen-

sible of a new-born partiality for this gentleman; and not having forgot what my sister had said to me, resolved to endure more of the house-keeper's company, that I might be less alone. This did not make much alteration; for Mr. Markland was too quick-sighted not to know that interest had its due weight with the house-keeper. He began therefore by making her presents, which his behaviour to me explained the reason of; and she, willing to deserve his bounty, multiplied opportunities for his coming into her room, and was continually in his absence telling me of his passion for me, of my good fortune, and how much it might turn out to my advantage, without my understanding in what manner she meant. I could comprehend no other method of being benefitted by his love, than marriage; every thing else to me appeared attended with guilt and ruin.

I was now much at a loss how to avoid Mr. Markland; and what was worse, my heart was ready to furnish me with excuses for not doing it. My religious principles grew weaker every day; piety was treated as enthusiasm, strictness of manners as folly; for 'our Maker was merciful, and designed to make us happy; which we could be only by following our pleasures: that our tastes and passions were given us as benefits, that we might receive happiness from gratifying them.'

My Lady having found me several times reading in a religious book, at last snatched it out of my hand; and throwing it down, said, 'The girl would turn her head: She never knew a puritanical servant, who did not turn out a whore or a thief; and that she
' wanted

' wanted not to have her jewels stolen to feed
' methodist parsons; or her cloaths pawned, to
' furnish out their weekly contributions.' As
I had never seen her so angry, I began to think
there must be some crime in religion, which I
did not know, to make it appear so offensive.

The house-keeper one day caught me at
prayers. This was told in the house-keeper's
room, as a most ridiculous circumstance. Much
laughter ensued. She asked me, if I was pray-
ing for a husband. Mr. Markland called me
his fair saint; told me, I mistook the mat-
ter; for I was made not to pray, but to be
prayed to.

To find religion both the object of serious
censure and of ridicule, made me think there
was something very uncommon in it; and that
in having it, I was certainly guilty of a great
peculiarity. My religion was rather founded on
habit than reason. I had been told *what* I should
do; but my father's continual occupation abroad
had prevented his teaching me *why* I was to do
so. Thus I was unprovided with reasons for my
practice; and Mr Markland, whose understand-
ing furnished him almost at one view with all
that could be said on every subject, was dili-
gent in removing what he called the prejudices
of education.

Every frailty that had been committed by any
person who professed some regard for religion, if
it had come to their knowledge, was repeated by
them with triumph: But I was not weak enough
to think this availed them much: for I had never
been taught to believe that any common degree
of piety would always conquer natural disposi-
tion, or be a certain defence again the tempta-
tions of the world; nor that the most religious

were infallible. While they were mortal, they must be frail ; and none pay so great a compliment to religion, as those who imagine every one who professes it must or should be a saint : But often wide is the profession from the practice !

In this manner we went on for near half a year that we continued in the country. Mr. Markland grew more assiduous and more open in his courtship, and I listened to it every day with more pleasure, and fewer fears. Nor did my companions suffer his cause to lose in his absence ; they continually contrived to leave us alone together ; when he would lavish all the vows and oaths that ever lover broke, with such tender importunity, that I sometimes wondered how, with a heart so filled with frailty, I had resisted. But principle still got the better of my passion, tho' it was risen to the utmost excess of tenderness.

Mr. Markland was too well acquainted with the human passions, and I too little with the arts of concealment, for him to remain ignorant of the state of my heart : And had he not perceived it, his faithful assistants would have informed him of it ; for they would in their discourse wind me in such a manner, that sometimes my blushes, and often my tears, explained it more fully than words could have done. On the knowledge of my weakness, Mr. Markland built his hopes of success. He often wondered at my resistance, but for ever expected it to fail. I sometimes had nothing but tears to answer to his tenderest professions. I wept for shame at listening to them, and for grief at thinking it necessary to reject them.

C H A P. IV.

‘ Where more is meant than meets the ear.’

MILTON.

WHEN we were in London, Mr. Markland had still more opportunities of seeing me. Sir George and my Lady were always abroad, or engaged in company. They seldom enquired after their son, thinking it the duty of polite parents to suffer him to take his own way; or if they happened to ask any questions, the servants knew what to answer. Thus almost all his time was passed with me. While I was busy in attending my Lady at her toilette, he made his necessary visits, that the rest of the day might be his own.

I confess I was not always desirous of avoiding him; but if I had, I could not easily have contrived it, for every servant was bought to his interest. I desired the house-maid, who had leisure in the afternoons, to come and work with me, thinking thereby either to prevent his coming, or at least to put some restraint on his addresses. But he no sooner entered, than she retired; and I found, upon questioning her, that every servant had felt his bounty, either to procure their secrecy, or assistance.

Sensible of my own weakness, and how far every one was combined for my destruction, I had still virtue enough left to wish that I could find some refuge against myself; but could see none, unless I could obtain it of my
 B 4 Lady.

Lady. Filled with this thought, I determined to apply to her for advice and assistance, acknowledging my own excess of passion, and giving her as little reason as possible to be angry with her son.

I waited with impatience for a summons to attend my Lady at her toilette, and took no small pains to keep up my resolution; which perhaps I had never been able to form, had not Mr. Markland been obliged that morning to go abroad with his father.

The time at length came; but, to my great disappointment, I was followed in by a country neighbour of her Ladyship's, who immediately desired to speak with her alone.

I was accordingly dismissed, and not recalled till the arrival of more company; upon whose appearance the first Lady took her leave. My purpose was equally disappointed; four visitors had taken the place of one.

One of the Ladies observed, that she who was gone away, looked very melancholy. 'Had you been mistress to the king, or his prime minister,' added she, 'I should have thought you had just refused a petition.'

"The most ridiculous woman," said my Lady; "surely, that ever was born! What do you think is the subject of her affliction?" Here her Ladyship laughed so violently, that she could not immediately answer their enquiry; tho' they all expressed great curiosity to know what it was.

"Would you believe," continued Lady Markland, "that all the excess of grief you see painted on the poor woman's countenance, proceeds from having discovered that her son, a young man of about three-and-twenty, keeps

“ keeps a mistress ; and she came to communicate her sorrows to me, hoping that from my friendship she should receive some compassion ?” Here they all joined in such peals of laughter, as Comus’s crew can scarcely equal.

‘ And pray,’ asked one of the Ladies, ‘ what consolation did your Ladyship give her ?’
 “ Consolation !” replied my Lady ; “ I asked the woman, if she expected her son to be a Joseph ? that no man of spirit was without intrigues : It was a male privilege.”

Is this the person, said I to myself, to whom I meant to apply for refuge against her son’s gallantry, and my own passion !

‘ A male privilege, indeed !’ answered one of the Ladies. ‘ We may see the men not only made laws, but customs. They have carved themselves out pretty lives. They the prime path of dalliance tread, while they would confine us to the thorny way.’

‘ Do not be so severe upon them,’ said another. ‘ You forget, that if none of our sex were in the path, it would not appear so flowery : They cannot exclude us.’

“ That,” interrupted my Lady, “ is an advantage to women of an inferior rank ; but people of fashion cannot well make use of it. If Spencer’s Sir Calidore had but been a real character, and the blatant beast, Slander, in fact killed, the case might have been different.”

‘ If it is not killed,’ interrupted another Lady, ‘ it has barked so long, that no-body regards it ; for really women are now under almost as few restraints as the men. But, pray, what is the woman this *unfortunate* Lady’s son has pitched upon ?’

‘ upon? Perhaps somebody very expensive; and that may have its inconveniencies.’

“ No,” replied Lady Markland; “ the young man has been humble enough; he has contented himself with one of *Mamma’s* maids.”

Here again the Ladies were highly entertained: But one of them observed, that ‘ she thought the lowness of his taste might be mortifying to an affectionate parent: There was a want of spirit and proper pride in it.’

In this manner the conversation was kept up, till two gentlemen arrived. My office being ended, I withdrew.

I heard with surprize so many women of character, who were so much my superiors in age and experience, and consequently I thought in wisdom, treat that as a privilege, which I had looked upon as the greatest misfortune that could befall me; and against which I wanted a defence, that I might better rely upon than my own resolution. What Mr. Markland had said to me on that subject, had less power over my judgment, than my affection gave him over my heart. His arguments came from a suspected quarter; his interest was visible, and therefore they had less weight; but when Ladies, who had no such inducements, confirmed his doctrine, how could I avoid suspecting myself of those ill grounded prejudices of which he so often accused me! My heart took advantage of this opportunity; and, with the assistance of such strong authorities, silenced my reason and my principles.

Full of these thoughts, I retired to my chamber, where I found Mr. Markland waiting for me. He received me with a transport beyond what so short a separation could make me expect. The joy so visible in his countenance, communicated

nicated itself to my heart; and I, who two hours before wanted to find a means of avoiding him for ever, was charmed at seeing him again. He told me, ' that no longer able to live without ' me, he had left his father at a chocolate-house, ' and returned home with the utmost impatience.' Fatal impatience!



C H A P. V.

The friends thou hast, and their adoption try'd,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel.

SHAKESP.

WE had now been in London above four months. I had continued corresponding with my sister; tho' not daring to communicate the thoughts that were uppermost in my mind, my style grew so constrained, and my letters so short, that she took notice of it; and, more grieved than offended, expressed fears for my health, attributing to some defect in that, the alteration in my manner: for it wore the appearance of melancholy. But if shame for the weakness I felt in my heart made writing to her so difficult to me, it is not strange, if, when guilt took its place, I was no longer able to write at all. I feared her advice, which was now the severest reproach to me; looked on myself as unworthy to address her; so much did I reverence a conduct, which I had not been able to imitate. From this time my correspondence with her ceased. As it had slackened so much before, she did not immediately observe it; but when a letter of

of

of hers had remained above a month unanswered, I received another from her, filled with the kindest anxiety and most alarming apprehensions.

They did not now appear without foundation, for my health was impaired: I grew pale and thin; my chearfulness was changed into tears and self-reproaches: For the little colour I retained, I was obliged to my blushes, which every eye that gazed on me, raised in my cheeks.

My Lady and Sir George observed the change, and very obligingly enquired into the nature of my complaints. I could by no means answer them with sincerity; but invented such disorders, as I thought they could not easily disprove.

The kind letter I have mentioned receiving from my sister, having remained unanswered, was followed by another, which informed me that she was soon coming to town; that the millener with whom she was, had a daughter now grown capable of managing the business; and therefore she had got from her a recommendation to one of the same trade in London; and as soon as the terms were settled, she should come there with great satisfaction, as it would bring her near me.

This news filled me with distress. How could I, who was not able to take courage to write to her, bear her sight, who would so circumstantially examine me about every particular of my situation and conduct; and whose eyes would no less exactly observe my person, which I had reason to believe would soon appear as visibly altered as my face?

I could not conceal my uneasiness from Mr. Markland, who was both the cause and the consolation of all my sufferings. He told me, it
only

only confirmed him in a purpose which he intended to propose to me; which was, to place me in a house, where I might live free from the continual apprehensions I now was in, and enjoy the ease and affluence I so well deserved; that it was but reasonable, that she who possessed his whole heart, should at least share his fortune. To see me so settled, would render him very happy, as he could then enjoy my conversation without restraint and interruption; and he flattered himself, that he should see less melancholy mixed with my tenderness, which was now an abatement to his felicity. He added, that he had considered of the impossibility of my attending his mother into the country; since a few months must affect my shape so as to render it apparent to her; and therefore he had intended to desire me to find some excuse for giving her notice that I should leave her, before the true cause could be perceived: and he was glad, that while he was gratifying himself in withdrawing from a state of servitude the woman, who in all eyes but those of the priests, must be looked upon as his wife (for as such he should ever esteem me in the tenderest sense), he should remove me from a sister, whose prejudices might be the occasion of much trouble to me.

This proposal was indeed a great relief to my spirits: I longed to be removed from the eyes I feared; but could find no good excuse for leaving my Lady. However, as the best I could invent, I took the first opportunity of informing her, that a relation in the country, whom I durst not disoblige, insisted on my coming to live with her.

Lady Markland suspected the truth of what I said; and told me, she wished it was not another
kind

kind of invitation that carried me away. ‘ But, girl,’ added she, ‘ depend upon this; All your beauty will not keep one lover, tho’ it may gain you a thousand. After a short possession, a woman not half so handsome will appear preferable, and you will be left on the common.’

Tho’ I had no reason to suppose her Ladyship inspired with any spirit but that of experience, I could not help being shocked at so dreadful a prophecy. Scarcely capable of answering her, and utterly unable to insist on the lye I had made, I with much difficulty, and with tears starting from my eyes, said, I hoped my behaviour had not given her Ladyship grounds for such a suspicion.

‘ No, no,’ replied my Lady: ‘ I have no fault to find with your conduct. You seem mighty sober and modest; but I never in my life knew a very demure girl come to any good.’

I was glad to come off with so general a reflection; for I was not without apprehensions from what she had said, that she suspected part of the truth. As for the fears she had excited, as soon as I told them to Mr. Markland, he dispelled them all, by the kindest assurances of constancy and unalterable love: Professions, which, contrary to all experience, will, I fancy, be believed, while love and folly exist.

Lady Markland having soon another servant recommended to her, I obtained liberty to depart before my sister came to town, and was guided by Mr. Markland’s servant to my new house, which was very pretty, and furnished in the neatest manner imaginable, tho’ not expensively. Mr. Markland was there to receive me, and was delighted

delighted with seeing me so well pleased with it, and with perceiving it was so much beyond my expectation; for Vanity had not yet found its way into my heart; Love too entirely filled it all.

I was desirous of putting my lover to as little expence as possible, therefore took but one servant; and endeavoured, by the regularity of my *menage*, to persuade the neighbourhood, that I was his wife, but obliged to conceal that circumstance during Sir George's life.

This opinion Mr. Markland gave all the colour to that he conveniently could; and indeed might safely do so; for whatever comfort my inexperience might draw from it, thinking I thereby avoided slander, he must well know that such indulgences to women in my situation are so common, that they find credit with none but the very lowest people; and that, instead of making a mistress pass for a wife, they often occasion one who is really a wife, to be taken for a mistress.

Sir George and Lady Markland did not stay long in town after I left them. Their son excused himself from going into the country with them, and by various pretences prolonged his stay.

He was now always with me, and always equally a lover. His tenderness continued unabated; tho' my frequent indispositions cast a languor over my countenance, and deadened my complexion. Whenever I was tolerably well, he carried me to some of the places of public diversion most frequented during the summer season. They were entirely new to me. His conversation would have rendered any place pleasing. It is not strange then that I was delighted with places so calculated to entertain. He thought
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the satisfaction I shewed in them a sufficient reward for the trouble of attending me; for he had been so long accustomed to them, that they had in great measure lost their charms to him.

Mr. Markland was extremely pleased at seeing me attract the notice of the company; and would, with particular satisfaction, make me observe the admiration that was paid; which was entirely overlooked by me, so wholly was my attention fixed on him. At first I was pleased with being admired, as I thought the approbation of others might recommend me the more to him; but at last I liked it for its own sake. Vanity, which had so long lurked unseen in my heart, began to grow perceptible; and the pleasure of being admired, made the greatest charm of a public place.

Mr. Markland was sometimes obliged to go down to his father for about a week; but short retirement urges sweet return. He always left me with regret, and returned with impatience. These little absences were great afflictions to me; from having been so long habituated to his company, I knew not how to live a day without him; a week was an age; and I became almost as insensible as a statue, till again cheered by his presence. I every moment regretted the loss of him; and sometimes, I confess, lamented that I was deprived of admiration; for when he was away, I never went abroad, unless some family business carried me: So that I not only lost the pleasure of my heart, but the delight of my vanity.

Towards the end of autumn, during one of these short excursions, I walked out to make some small purchases. In my way, I went thro' a street which I had not been in before; and
going

going by a millener's shop, I stepped in for some little thing I wanted ; when the first person who offered to serve me, proved to be my sister. We were both so affected, that we became motionless for some time. My sister recovering herself the soonest, ran to me to embrace me ; when casting down her eyes, she perceived the alteration in my shape ; and instead of coming up to me, sunk down into a chair, where a flood of tears relieved her.

I stood in no less want of relief, but could find none. I was almost suffocated with the struggle in my breast, between the various passions that affected me. My sister, seeing the condition I was in, cried out, ' Oh ! my poor Emily ! ' And leading me into a parlour behind the shop, called for some hartshorn ; and when she had brought me to myself, ' Oh ! my dear child,' said she, ' what can I say to you ! How can I bear to see ' you in the condition you appear in ! And yet, ' how dare I say what I would, when I fear that ' even the sight of me may have done your constitution irreparable mischief ! I would not increase the shock I have given you ; and yet ' can I, with any degree of propriety, see you again ? The account I received at Lady Markland's door, when I went with the most tender and anxious impatience to enquire after you, is ' but too well confirmed. O thou fallen Angel ! ' how can my fond heart support the sight of ' thee, thus involved both in present and future ' misery ! '

I could answer only with my tears. I threw myself on my knees, and catching hold of hers, my streaming eyes begged for pardon, but my words could find no utterance, till at last I got power enough to say, ' Forgive me, my dearest ' sister !

‘ sister! My parent, best of friends, forgive me!’

‘ My dearest sister,’ said she, ‘ ask not forgiveness of me : Ask it of Him whom you have most offended, and who not only can pardon the past, but preserve you from all future crimes.’

My sister thus continued her exhortations for some time, till she asked me, ‘ If I would quit the way of life wherein I was engaged, and never see the man who led me into a state of ruin and destruction; promising, that if I consented to this, she would take all possible care of me, and provide me with every convenience : For tho’ she was then going to be married to a young man, who was a very advantageous match for her, and whom she sincerely loved; yet if he, disapproving of her conduct in this particular, should attempt to restrain it, she would for ever forego all her expectations, and should think herself greatly rewarded by saving me from eternal ruin.’

What could I say, when I could not resolve to accept of so kind, so generous an offer ! I begged her not to oppress me with her goodness : That I was not deserving of her care; and would never suffer her affection for me to prevent her happy establishment : Wished heaven might shower down all its blessings on her; but that as for myself the die was cast; I was too far engaged to retreat.’ She again pressed her offer : I told her, I could not deprive the child I went with of a parent; nor was it possible for me to forsake a man whose whole happiness was centered in me, and who deserved every thing from

‘ from me, having no aim but to promote my
‘ felicity.’

When my sister found me unalterable in this respect, ‘ Then,’ said she, ‘ my dear Emily, I
‘ will not urge what I might properly say, be-
‘ cause I fear to hurt your health : I will not
‘ now endeavour at what I see your passions
‘ would render ineffectual to any purpose, but
‘ that of making you uneasy, when ease of
‘ mind will be most necessary to your reco-
‘ very : I can only pray that your life may be
‘ spared till you are fitter for another world ;
‘ and that He who alone can turn the heart,
‘ will take compassion on yours : But it is impos-
‘ sible for me to see you any more ; it would
‘ only be increasing my wretchedness and creat-
‘ ing yours. The thought of the situation you
‘ are in will embitter my most prosperous days ;
‘ but it is my duty not to suffer it to disgrace
‘ them.’

I cried out, in an agony which no words can express, ‘ My dearest sister, do not despise
‘ me, do not hate me : Your hatred or your
‘ contempt would break my heart.’

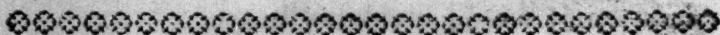
‘ No,’ my dearest Emily,’ replied my sister ;
‘ be assured I can never hate or despise you :
‘ I shall pity, grieve, and pray for you ; but,
‘ with all your faults, must love you ; love you
‘ with a tenderness none but a parent can know ;
‘ for such I have always felt myself for you :
‘ And whenever you will love yourself as truly
‘ as I love you, shall with joy receive you,
‘ forget the past, hope for the future, endea-
‘ vour to relieve your griefs, and confirm your
‘ happiness.’

With many tears and embraces, we took leave
of each other. A chair was called ; for I was
not

not able to walk ; my body felt so strongly the effects of the agitation of my mind.

I never was so sensible of the sacrifice I had made Mr. Markland, as when I returned home, and reflected how true, how amiable a friend I had given up for him. When I considered my sister's whole conduct, how little did I appear in my own eyes ! I do not know how I could have supported the view of my own meanness, had not Mr. Markland arrived in town, and restored me to my vanity ; for nothing but vanity could preserve me from my own contempt ; for I think I may properly give that name to an opinion that exceeds what we deserve.

A young woman called at my door, to inquire after my health, for two or three days successively, after this interview with my sister, who I judged was sent by her, in kind anxiety, lest the great flutter of my spirits should have impaired my constitution. After that, I heard nothing of her ; nor durst I make any inquiries at that time.



C H A P. VI.

The world's a scene of changes ; and to be
 Constant, in nature were inconstancy :
 For 'twere to break the laws herself has made ;
 Our substances themselves do fleet and fade :
 The most fix'd being still does move and fly,
 Swift as the wings of time, 'tis measur'd by.
 T' imagine then that love should never cease ;
 Love, which is but the ornament of these ;
 Were quite as senseless, as to wonder why
 Beauty and colour stay not when we die. COWLEY.

NO change happened in my way of life,
 'till I was brought to bed of a very fine
 boy :

boy : Nor did this make any alteration, but my temporary illness, and the addition of this lovely child to our family ; which was an increase of happiness. Our fondness for it was equal ; and instead of our affection's being lessened, by having a third to share it with us, each seemed to look on the other's being parent to this little darling, as a new merit, which caused, if possible, an increase of fondness.

The winter altered, not lessened, our attendance on public amusements ; but we were obliged to go in a more private manner, as there was a greater chance of meeting with some of Mr. Markland's graver acquaintance. This caution, if I had not been lost to shame, must have shocked me : but the violence of my passion, the extreme tenderness of Mr. Markland's behaviour, and the care he took to furnish me with books, that should in his absence keep alive my infatuation, made me regardless of every thing else ; and no one was ever disposed to say more cordially from her heart,

Fame, Wealth, and Honour, what are you to Love !

A second year passed away in this madness of the mind ; but at the beginning of the third, I thought I discovered an alteration in Mr. Markland : He endeavoured to appear the same ; but the tenderness of his behaviour, instead of being the free emanation of his heart, seemed forced and constrained. The impediments to his coming to me were multiplied : One would have thought that people were now making themselves reparation for having lost so much of his company, and were determined to engross him entirely. Even his child grew less dear to him, tho' every day more engaging.

At first I endured this change in silence, and
in

in tears I may add ; for weeping was now my principal employ in his absence ; and I believe nothing could have prevented its being constantly so, but the fear of rendering myself odious in the eyes of him, to whom it was too grievous to be looked upon even with indifference. At last, I gently hinted my apprehensions ; but I found I gave offence, because I saw too clearly ; and to avoid any thing that might make me lose the little of his company which I now enjoyed, I determined hereafter to bear all in silence. But it is not in the power of language to describe the anguish of my heart, nor the difficulty I found in concealing it.

In this wretched state I continued for three months ; a state which seldom changes for a better, unless when it creates indifference in us, which, to some women, is almost as difficult as to conquer that of their lovers ; and to add to my misfortunes, I was one of those, who, obstinately fond, can

Doubt, yet doat ; despair, yet fondly love.

Cruel as I thought my situation, yet I found there was a state of distraction beyond it ; for into such I was thrown by a letter brought me from Mr. Markland, wherein he acquainted me, that he was then at his first stage towards Harwich, where he was going, in order to embark for a foreign port, having accepted an employment under one of our ambassadors.

The distress of my mind was now beyond what any one can comprehend, who has not sacrificed all she did or ought to hold dear, to one man, whose tenderness seemed for some time to recompense her for all she had relinquished, whose love constituted all her happiness, and who at last, by the most cruel inconstancy, threw her
from

from the airy height of bliss to which he had exalted her, into the lowest abyfs of misery.

Before the receipt of this cruel letter, I thought my grief could not admit of increase: To lose Mr. Markland's affection, appeared to me the heaviest misfortune: I did not then understand how soon a woman, who cannot possess a man's esteem, loses all his regard when he ceases to love her. But to be left with such indifference! a child abandoned without one parting kiss! was a shock too great for my constitution to bear. My weak understanding was so shaken, that for two days I was quite out of my senses: To this a fever succeeded, which was violent, but not tedious.

As soon as my shattered brain grew a little composed, anxiety for my child made me desirous to preserve a life which seemed to promise me nothing but misery: But what would I not have undergone, rather than leave that dear babe friendless and defenceless, in a world which now was very low in my estimation! For it is the way of us all, if one person uses us ungratefully, to quarrel with the whole human race: Never sensible of universal faults, till we suffer by those of some individual.

Care for my child rendered me obedient to all the orders of my physician, who told me, I must not hope for recovery, unless I could compose my mind to some degree of resignation. This argument made me use every means to change the natural current of my thoughts.

My little boy, as the only object now of my affections, (and the only inducement for my endeavouring to raise myself out of that state of despair) I would have always with me; but how often did that increase my grief, by reminding me

me of his father ! If he smiled on me, I thought I saw his father's sweetness, which had charmed my soul : An endearing action brought to my remembrance his father's tenderness : If he was diverting, I said to myself, ' How would these ' once have delighted his father ! ' If he looked pale, how would this air of sickness have alarmed his father's fondness !

In spite of grief, my fever left me ; and I found it necessary to resolve on some means for my child's and my own support. Mr. Markland had left no provision for us ; but, as if he justly thought that after the loss of his affection, every thing else was insignificant, he was as regardless of lesser particulars for me, as he might imagine I should be for myself.

While Mr. Markland loved, he was generous ; and as I was a good œconomist, I had near a hundred pounds by me ; and having some cloaths, which were better than would be required in the way of life into which I intended to enter, I converted them into money ; and turned the parlour, with little expence or alteration, into a haberdasher's shop, laying out all my money in stock. I sent my landlord warning that I would quit his house after the necessary notice, intending to take myself a cheaper habitation.

The execution of this purpose was of service to me : It employed my attention, and gave me a subject to think of ; which, tho' productive of no pleasure, yet gave me no pain. I had not ease of mind sufficient to be anxious about my success ; every thing appeared too trifling to move me much. As for my child, I wept over him, instead of rejoicing in him. I had now no affection but what gave me uneasiness : What I fancied was the source of sublime happiness, I found
was

was productive of the greatest misery. But my sorrows were grown quiet; I was composedly wretched.



C H A P. VII.

I pass'd this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains :
The sons of public rapine were destroying ;
They told me, by the sentence of the law,
They had commission to seize all thy fortune.

OTWAY.

I Did not succeed ill in my business ; the humbled air which grief gave me, I believe softened the rigid virtue of my neighbours ; and as I sold rather cheaper than most people in the same way of trade, in order to incite them to deal with me, I seemed well established in about two months after I had furnished my little shop.

But great was my surprize, when one morning two men entered my house, who immediately arrested me, and seized my goods.

I was more amazed at this insolence, than frightened ; for I was sure I had incurred no debts, and therefore told them they must have mistaken the house and person. Of which I had no doubt ; but greatly was I shocked, when they informed me, that they were employed by my landlord, who had never received any rent from the time Mr. Markland took the house, nor payment for the furniture, with which, being an upholsterer and cabinet-maker, he had furnished him ; and that he could easily prove that whatever I had belonged to Mr. Markland.

VOL. I.

C

All

All the horrors of a prison now presented themselves to my imagination : I easily perceived my stock could not discharge this debt ; and with little ceremony was told by these men, that nothing else could save me from a gaol, and that I must go with them. What now to do with my child I knew not : to expose it to the colds and damps of so nauseous a place, shocked my nature : As for myself, had no other depended on me, I should have been less anxious : I had resigned myself to misery, and which way it was brought upon me seemed of little consequence. One relief I immediately felt from this misfortune ; the love which I had till now borne to Mr. Markland, whose inconstancy I almost forgave, as a weakness in his nature, was entirely obliterated, by so mean and cruel an action as leaving me exposed to such infinite distress ; for he could not but know that his absence would determine the landlord to take care of his own interest : And probably I should not have been left so long in quiet possession of the house, but that he might the more certainly get all I had, when my shop was furnished in the best manner I was able.

I now despised the man I could not hate, and no longer felt the pangs of slighted love ; but the terrors of my approaching fate took their place : I was weeping over my child, who, frightened at my agonies, was more clamorous in his grief, hung round my neck, and screamed, he knew not why, only he perceived the men were the cause of my affliction : And as they, provoked at the noise he made, began to swear at him, he grew more terrified ; and with the assistance of the lamentations my maid uttered, who thought the degree of grief was to be measured by clamour,

mour, the uproar was great enough to bring in an old Lady, who came to hire a house at the next door to me.

She had been to see it the day before, and had taken notice of my child, with whom I was standing at the door, and asked me some questions about the neighbourhood, more, in appearance, for the sake of conversation than curiosity.

This Lady, as I said, was attracted by the clamour she heard in my house, and came in to ask the cause of it.

The bailiffs were the most able to speak, and gave her a surly answer; but one which was so much to the purpose, that in a few words they made her comprehend the whole matter.

She came up to me, and enquired if the balance against me was great. I told her I could not tell how that might be, as I knew not what difference would be made in the valuation of the goods, when they came to be appraised, from what they had been sold at; but that it ought not to be considerable, for the damage was small, they having been always used and kept with great care: That except this difference, the balance on either side could be but trifling, for my stock would answer the rent; but that to one who had nothing, a debt of thirty pounds was as bad as one of three hundred, and must render me equally insolvent.

She then asked the men what they designed should become of me till the affair was settled: They replied, I must either go home with them, or to gaol.

"Have you no-body," said she to me, "to be bail for you?" "No one," answered I; for my sister was the only person to whom I could apply, and I would not harbour a thought of

making her a greater sufferer by my ill conduct than she already had been, or of running the least hazard of causing any difference between her and her husband ; for long before this time I imagined she was married. I was sensible that if she knew my distress, she would be anxious to relieve it ; and as her husband might not chuse to give his money to one so unworthy, disputes and disgust might arise on the subject.

‘ It is hard,’ said the old Lady, ‘ you should know no-body who will perform such an act of humanity. Tho’ I am not fond of having any thing to do where the law is concerned, yet I cannot withhold my assistance from one who is in so very distressful a situation, and who seems born to suffer from the cruelty of mankind. I will bail this young woman, and will take upon myself the settling her affairs :’ [Turning to the bailiffs.]

I was all gratitude : A thousand blessings and a thousand thanks I gave her. But the men were not so ready to accept her offer ; they said they must first enquire into her character and substance, and know whether she was responsible.

‘ If you have any doubts of that kind,’ said she, ‘ let the goods be appraised directly : The day is long enough for settling the whole affair.’

This proposal was agreed to ; my landlord was sent for ; my stock in trade was valued by the bills of what I had paid for it, and appraisers determined the value of the furniture.

My benefactress had left me before my landlord came ; and as evening grew on, I grew under great apprehensions lest prudence should get the better of charity, and prevent her return : But before the whole was entirely settled, she came ; the balance was drawn, and I remained debtor but

but about 20 pounds. She paid the money, and said she would require no consideration of me but a note of hand, in case I ever should be able to pay her; and as I was at a loss where to go that night, offered to carry me home with her.

This additional kindness charmed me: My heart was inexpressibly relieved by such generosity: For the present I forgot the destitute condition I was in; I was delivered from immediate distress, and Mr. Markland's baseness had relieved my heart from the tenderness which till then oppressed it; so that I think, entirely penniless as I was, these were much the happiest hours I had enjoyed from the time that Mr. Markland's affections began visibly to alter.

My benefactress took me and my little boy into the coach, and we soon arrived at her house. She told me, that as my spirits had undergone a great deal of fatigue, and she was to have some company that evening, it might perhaps be more agreeable to me to retire to my own room; to which she led me, and ordered a servant to see that I had every thing I wanted; and then, taking her leave of me, wished me good night; saying, she feared she should not be able to get to me again that evening.

I repeated all the acknowledgements my gratitude could suggest, and wished her a rest equally refreshing to the infinite relief she had given to my despairing mind.

C H A P. VIII.

Prospects at distance please, but when they're near,
 We find but desert rocks and fleeting air:
 From stratagem to stratagem we run;
 And he knows most who latest is undone.

GARTH.

WHEN I was left alone, and began to reflect on the various events on that day, it seemed a general scene of confusion; they had pass'd in such quick succession, that the recollection made me giddy.

The variety of thoughts which all these things suggested to my mind, would have engrossed my attention a long time, had not my little boy interrupted me; the bustle of the day had wearied him. I put him to bed, and that being done, I began to observe the furniture of my room.

The furniture was old and tattered, and every thing very dirty; but had once been handsome. I was surprized at the condition it was in, as I imagined the mistress of the house to be a woman of fortune, from the generosity she had shewn towards me; and from her age I expected such a degree of œconomy, as would prevent so much dirt and rags. I wondered therefore, what could occasion this appearance, and flattered myself I might be of some use in doing my best to repair the destruction, which seemed less owing to the ravages of time than to want of care.

A servant, not much more cleanly than my chamber, came to ask me what I chose for supper: I told her any thing the family had; I begged I might give no additional trouble. "My mistress," said she, "thought you might be
 "tired,

“tired, and want to go to bed before their supper time, so ordered me to enquire.”

“At what time do they sup then?” I asked.
 “It is quite uncertain,” answered the servant;
 “sometimes it is vastly late, but never before
 “eleven.”

I had been used to late hours at Lady Markland's, so was not surprized: I thought I had got again into the house of a fine Lady; but, since that was the case, desired a piece of bread and butter, which would be a sufficient supper for me.

My request was not soon complied with; but as I heard many raps at the door, I easily guessed the servants were either busied by the arrival of so much company, or it had made them forget me. It was near eleven o'clock before any one appeared again in my apartment, and then the same maid brought me part of a fowl, some punch and wine, telling me, that as she had found the company came earlier than common, she thought she had better stay till she could offer me a more comfortable supper than what I had ordered.

I asked her if they had often so much company; to which she answered in the affirmative; and added, with an air of pride and satisfaction, “she did not believe there was a house in town that had more.”

I had observed while I lived at Sir George Markland's, that my Lady and many others piqued themselves on having a great concourse of people at their houses, and that, to acquire the more honour, they would often stretch the truth as to the numbers that had been there the night before; but I was diverted to find this pride descend to a servant, who, by her appearance, must be in the very lowest place in the house;

and wondered what advantage she could find in her Lady's drums being more frequent or more crowded than other people's.

Being heartily tired, I went to bed as soon as I had supped; but had not been long asleep before I was startled with a variety of noises: some seemed laughing, others scolding, others at romps. I was terrified with the clamour; the first effect of my fear was jumping out of bed and bolting the door, and then I could attend to it with a little more composure, but not without a thousand apprehensions, which, tho' the house grew pretty quiet about four o'clock in the morning would not suffer me to get any sleep.

I rose early, but found the family were making themselves amends for the time they had stolen from the night, for nobody came into my room till near ten o'clock, nor had I courage to go out of it, to see if any one was up: The same servant whom I had seen the night before, then made her appearance: I asked her if any disaster had happened, which occasioned so much noise at so late an hour? "Nothing particular," she answered. "Is your company always so loud?" said I. "Not always," replied she, "but sometimes still more so." "Indeed!" cried I; "And pray how often may you have company?" "Oh! every night," answered the girl, "what-ever house may be empty, ours is always full."

My apprehensions had encreased during this whole dialogue, and now they were almost risen to their greatest height: But to remove all doubt, I asked her, whether their company consisted mostly of gentlemen or ladies?

The girl laughed at the foolishness of my question, and told me, 'they had few Ladies come there; not but a Gentleman might, if he

‘ he pleased, bring a Lady, and they would be
 ‘ very genteely accommodated ; but they seldom
 ‘ chose it, as all her young Ladies were so hand-
 ‘ some, it would not be easy to find any equal to
 ‘ them.’

I was indeed now past any doubt : Uncertainty, however anxious, would have been a blessing to this certainty : I thought I should have fainted ; and indeed I believe nothing could have recalled my senses, which were just fled, but the screams of the servant, who was so used to clamour, that she did not think any moderate noise could be sufficiently expressive of fear, and set up her pipes with such a violence at seeing me sink, pale and breathless, into a chair that stood by me, that she not only called back my departing spirits, but brought two or three of the young *Ladies*, whose beauty she had been boasting, into my room.

As my colour had not returned with my senses, I still looked more like a corpse than one alive. The girl was asked the occasion of this disorder, but could give little account of it : She told them, ‘ the young gentlewoman had been asking her questions but the minute before, and ‘ she could not imagine what was the matter.’ My poor little boy, frightened to see his mamma look so pale, ran to me, and, by his tender and amiable caresses, did more to recover me than all the attention of the young *Ladies*, who held salts to my nose, rubbed my temples, and did all they thought requisite for my relief ; but their appearances counteracted their care, by terrifying me more than the other could revive me.

Uncomb’d their locks, and squalid their attire,
 Unlike the trim of love or gay desire.

The dirty rags in which they were cloathed, shewed their wretchedness. Their faces, which in the evening were to shine with borrowed charms, were now the emblems of decay and sickness; swoln excess, riotous intemperance, and foul misrule, were imprinted on each countenance.

I do not believe I could have quite recovered myself while they were in my sight, but, fortunately for me, they were called to breakfast, from which my indisposition excused me, and I was indulged with a dish of tea in my own room.

When I was left alone the distraction of my mind found some vent, by tears and lamentations. I now felt a degree of distress beyond what I had yet experienced, or ever feared. How severely did I arraign myself of folly, in having conceived no suspicion of this wretched woman; and quarrelled with my heart for having seen her action in no such very strange light, as to suppose it must arise from any thing but generosity. I thought that, in the same situation, I should have done like her; and therefore was grateful, but not surprized: so far was my candour in thus judging of her from administering any comfort to me, that I wished my temper more suspicious, tho' rendered so by defects in my own heart, from which it was now free: indeed, in this case, the most common prudence might have preserved me; but I was rendered so senseless by the terrors of my situation, that I was blind to every other danger.

I shall not tire you with endeavouring to describe the agitation of my mind, which was far beyond all power of description; but shall only say, that the prison I had so much feared, now appeared to me an eligible asylum; and all my
hopes

hopes were, that if I was found refractory to the purposes of the person who had thus bought me of myself, resentment might tempt her to throw me into the gaol from whence she had so cruelly relieved me.

After breakfast was over, the woman, who the night before I had beheld with reverence and gratitude as my noble benefactress, came into my room; and taking hold of my hand with a fawning affectation of kindness, told me, 'she was sorry to find I had been so ill; she supposed it was occasioned by what I had suffered the day before; but she did not doubt but I should soon recover, as my mind would forget all past disasters in her house, which was a temple dedicated to pleasure;' and continued in such intelligible terms, that no further explanation was necessary.

To sit and hear the profession of such abandoned sentiments, was an additional shock: Criminal as I had been, my detestation to this way of life was as great as if I had been more consistently virtuous. I informed her, that 'she was disappointed in her views; but offered, if she would forbear all attempts to induce me to comply, that I would with pleasure submit to the lowest offices in her house, or rather what she esteemed the lowest, and perform the part of her menial servant, till she herself should acknowledge that I had amply paid my debt.'

She told me, "that every word I spoke, more fully proved my folly; for I must be extremely silly indeed, to think she would be contented with my saving her three or four pounds a year, when she did not despair of my gaining her as many hundreds, for the first year at least; and after that, by paint and
"dress,

“ dress, I might make a very attracting figure
 “ among the rest of her girls.”

All that prayers and intreaties could do, I tried without success; and when that failed, I endeavoured to provoke her to send me to prison: but all to no other purpose, than, as she said, to shew my folly, in supposing she had not taught every passion, as well as every principle, to be subservient to her interest.

All I uttered had no other effect than to make her give orders that I should not be suffered to stir out of the house.

While I opposed her, she set me at defiance, and threatened me with immediate revenge; which she was too well able to execute, having every one at her command, and I no one to defend me. I therefore tried to delay what I could not repel; and by promising to endeavour to get the better of my reluctance, prevailed upon her to allow me time to learn to command my behaviour, which, in my present disposition, might disgust those she chose I should please.



CHAP. IX.

Who can all sense of others ills escape,
 Is but a brute at best, in human shape.

TATE.

UNDER this pretence, I obtained liberty to live entirely in my own chamber for a whole month, hoping still that some fortunate accident might relieve me; but all in vain: At the end of that time, she assured me she would be fooled no longer, and made me dress myself with more than usual care, in a gown and ornaments which she provided for me; and told me, that

that she would absolutely bring a gentleman to see me that evening, whose generosity she so much extolled, that I had some hopes I might find him generous indeed ; not in lavishing money on a bawd, but in relieving the distressed. I found I had been promised to him, which proved that he paid high ; but this was but a poor dependence for my expectations.

This wretched woman kept her word with a diabolical exactness. She introduced the gentleman pretty early in the evening, for expectation had made him come sooner than her visitors usually did : She retired. I was sorry to see how much this man was struck with my appearance ; it in a great degree damped my hopes ; but despair encouraged me to proceed, and I began to attack his compassion in the strongest manner I could, by uttering all the sentiments of my soul. I kneeled at his feet, used tears and prayers to soften him, and did my utmost to excite his generosity.

At first he seemed to think all this was mere hypocrisy, with a design to raise the value of his conquest ; but he soon found I was perfectly sincere, and with joy I perceived him affected. This animated me still more, and I pursued my intreaties till he granted them, and told me he would desire no more of me than that I would inform him how, in such a disposition, I could come into that house.

I then related to him the whole affair, suppressing only the manner in which I had lived with Mr. Markland, whom I called my husband : not, I think, out of pride : I was too much humbled to attempt to conceal even my crimes ; but I feared, if he knew this circumstance, he would have less regard to my petition ; and think my having offended with one man, gave every

every other a right to expect I should be the same to them.

When I had ended my story, the gentleman told me I might judge of his compassion from the mortification he inflicted on himself; for that, tho' he was much attached to the sex in general, and had always been so, he had never seen a woman he thought half so lovely as myself; that she who had the disposing of me was sufficiently sensible of my charms, as appeared by the price she set upon me; which, however, he was much more willing to lose, than to give up his title to me; but to shew me he could be generous to virtue as well as to vice, he would relinquish both, and at my desire, pretend himself better satisfied with my conduct than he had reason to be; for I had begged he would not betray me to the woman, whom I now beheld with as much horror, as I had once done with gratitude.

That he might be the better credited, he sat with me near two hours after he had made me this promise. I wished he would have secured me from persons less generous than himself, by redeeming me from this horrid place, but durst not hint my desire, for fear of offending him; and he stifled my hopes, by observing to me, how impossible it was for me to escape out of it, for that the money which she had laid down for me, would be but a small part of my debt; she would charge so much for my board, and the cloaths I had then on, that would run it up to a much more considerable sum.

After having represented all this to me, and the impossibility of my prevailing with other men as I had done with him, he endeavoured to persuade me to submit patiently to my lot, and not to grant to one less generous, what I denied

to

to him; promising that I should share his bounty, whereas it commonly was dispensed only to the person who claimed the power of selling us.

He bore my refusal of this proposal as generously as he had done the first, and took his leave of me in the politest manner, and, if I may be allowed to form any judgment from his appearance, with real concern for me.

As soon as the gentleman was gone from the house, the old woman, and some of the young ones who were disengaged, came to me, and carried me down into a small room to supper, where none but ourselves were admitted; not so much to indulge me as a reward for my good behaviour, as because I was thought too valuable while new, to be exposed to common eyes.

My odious companions were all in very good humour, and I was so delighted with, and, encouraged by, my success, that I had never before appeared so easy. I flattered myself I should continue as fortunate as I began, and the effect this hope had upon me, gave room for a supposition that I was grown better reconciled to my way of life.

I was not to continue long in doubt, whether my arguments would be always equally prevalent; the next day brought fresh occasion for my rhetoric. The appearance of the man was less encouraging; he wanted the politeness of manner and good-natured countenance, which was remarkable in the other; however, I was not turned from my purpose by my fears of failing in it; on the contrary, I was animated by despair more than before by hope, and by my tears and aversion, extinguished all thoughts of pleasure or of love in his rugged breast; but leaving me with curses, he went to the old woman, and bestowing some oaths on her,
made

made her refund the money she had received from him.

This threw her into a violent rage, and not being able to vent it on him, I must necessarily fall the victim. She brought up with her into my room three of her young women, who, angry that I should by my conduct shew a disapprobation of theirs, were fit to assist her in executing her wrath on me; accordingly they fell on me with the utmost fury, and beat me in the most merciless manner, till one of them hit me such a blow on my temples as struck me senseless to the ground.

As murder was a crime which was not professed in this infamous house, they were alarmed lest they had killed me; and fearing the consequences of their rage, put me to bed, and took all possible care to bring me to myself.

As soon as they had done so, I found my person was one general bruise. I was so sore, I knew not how to lie or move; but my greatest pain was in my eye, near which the last blow was given. It was soon so swelled up, I could not see; and as defacing me did not at all answer the wretches purpose, they omitted no care to remedy the ill they had done, plaistering me up in the manner they thought most likely to hasten my recovery.

I was in hopes they had put out my eye; shocking as the thought was, it appeared in a desirable light to me, as I might reasonably expect from it a total dismissal from that house, where I could be of no value when so disfigured. I had suffered too much by my beauty to be anxious for the preservation of it, and one eye might guide me to a more comfortable livelihood, than I was likely to gain in the house where I then was.

These thoughts made me take off the things
they

they applied to my eye whenever I was alone, if possible, to prevent my cure ; but, in spite of my endeavours, the swelling abated, and I found my sight had received no hurt ; but the blood settling round it, I had such a black eye, as rendered me too rueful a spectacle to be produced.

This accident obliged me to be concealed for above a month ; for it was thought imprudent to shew me till I was in full beauty.

This delay was precious, and I would have endured another beating for the like benefit ; but they had suffered too severely already for this exertion of their power, therefore they resolved upon a method less detrimental to my person.



C H A P: X.

——Famine is in thy cheeks,
Need and oppression staring in thy looks,
Contempt and beggary hang on thy back. SHAKESP.

AS soon as I was thought to look tolerably well, the infernal woman told me that all my resistance would be in vain ; that my ingratitude had quite disgusted her, and she was resolved no longer to shew me any indulgence, but would expose me to the addresses of people too low and brutal to regard my tears, till I was broke of my niceness ; and would send my child to the officers of the parish where it belonged, for she should no longer gratify me with its company, when I shewed so little consideration for her.

These menaces were dreadful indeed ; and to talk of exposing my little darling to the cruelty of parish-officers and nurses, was too much to bear. Enraged at such a monster, I replied, ‘ The law
‘ would

“ would grant me some redress against such inhumanity.”

“ The law ! thou idiot,” answered she, “ Dost thou take lawyers for knights-errant, who have nothing to do but to deliver distressed damsels ? Know, that money only can obtain justice ; those who cannot buy, must go without it ; the redress of the law is out of the reach of poverty ; content yourself, there is no law for you. But I shall not give myself the trouble of saying any more to you ; I give you till to-morrow to chuse ; either determine to conquer your squeamishness, or I send your brat away, and deliver you up to the first man who will disregard all your tears and intreaties. Your will shall make no other difference in the case, than in the degree of your lovers, and your brat’s fate.”

With these words she left me to consider the alternative. The dear babe understood something of being sent from me, and running to me, hung round my neck, crying he would not go away without me, and begging me not to let that woman take him.

Alas ! dear Innocent, I did not mean it : I could much sooner have parted with my life. The wretch had now found the means of subduing my resolution. Delicacy, for by that name, not by the sacred one of virtue, I must call my resistance, after a conduct so criminal as mine : Delicacy, I say, gave way to maternal love : Nor could the latter boast any great triumph ; for I had no prospect of gaining any advantage by my further perseverance ; on the contrary, I was only likely to be exposed to the greater insults.

The declaration of my resolution was received the next day with great satisfaction ; I was flattered and caressed, and my child fondled ; but I could

I could not be sensible to kind treatment so obtained.

In this detestable house I had remained about a month after this, when the old woman was taken ill of a violent fever, occasioned by having eat and drank immoderately for some nights successively. This illness put a stop to her trade; and three days carried her into a world, where one cannot think of her without horror.

As soon as she was dead, a relation came to look into her effects, who had been ashamed to own any connexion with her infamy; but at her death was willing to receive the profits arising from her crimes.

By this accident we were all set at liberty; what became of the rest I know not; I was too glad to get clear of them all to make any inquiries; but for my own part, my joy at this release was beyond expression.

The best cloaths that were worn by us were sold; but those of less value were given amongst us; and the notes of hand, and such other obligations as had been used as means of getting us into her power, were cancelled, the purpose of them being too well known to her relation.

I was quite destitute of money, for our pockets were searched every morning, so that what presents any gentleman made us were sure to be taken away; therefore I sold the best gown which had fallen to my share, in order to support me till I had found some means of gaining a subsistence.

Sensible that I should find great difficulty in maintaining myself and child, I took the cheapest lodging I could find, only mending it by cleanliness. I then enquired for plain work; but received every where for answer, that they could not trust their things to a stranger; they were acquainted

acquainted with people enough who wanted such employment; they need not give it to one they knew nothing of.

This was a melancholy answer. I now thought I would try to get a place; but when I offered myself, one said, 'I was too handsome;' another, 'that I appeared too genteel for such a place as I offered for,' (not daring to attempt any high one, as having no hopes to get it) and, 'there must be something very bad in my conduct, or I could not be reduced to such low services.' Those who were not deterred by my appearance, asked, What recommendation I had? Who would give me a character? In this manner I was repulsed from every door, and found that one who can do no work but what great numbers of others do as well, may be reduced to want employment. I now wished I had learnt of my sister a variety of works, some of which might have afforded me a support; for people are less nice in those they employ, for things they cannot easily get done elsewhere.

I was now reduced to manifest danger of starving. I would have attempted the most laborious work, but no one would try me in what I am afraid I should have acquitted myself but ill, tho' I offered my labour at half price; but even my industry was made an argument against me, 'I must be very bad to be reduced to that, and they supposed I intended to steal the other half of my wages.'

In this deplorable condition I determined to apply to my sister. I did not now live in actual sin, and therefore could do it with the more courage. By enquiring at the millener's where I had seen her, I learnt her abode, and thither I went. Variety of misfortunes had altered me extremely. My sister was in her shop, and rejoiced

joiced to see me, hoping, by my venturing to her again, that I had reformed my conduct; but my changed countenance shocked her, and rendered her reception of me more melancholy, but not less kind. Before we had time to interchange many words, her husband came in, who guessing at me by the description she had given him, very abruptly told me, ‘ I was not fit company for his wife, and desired I would not frequent his house; for all the ties of kindred were broken by my infamy.

My spirits were lowered by distress, and I may say by hunger, for I had tasted nothing for above twenty-four hours; this cruel reproach, so ill timed, struck me to the heart: I was not able to make any answer; but to avoid encreasing his anger, which seemed falling on his wife for having received me, I withdrew, almost drowned in tears, and scarcely able to support the weight of my afflicted body.

A good woman passed by me as I was dragging myself along, and sobbing as if my heart would break, and being moved at my distress, put her hand in her pocket, and pulling out a shilling, asked me, ‘ if that would do me any good?’

It is easy to be imagined that I received it with joy and gratitude; in my distressed condition a less sum would have been a great relief. She seemed happy in the good she had done, and said, ‘ She wished she had more for me:’ I bless’d her for that she had given me, and we parted.

I stopped in my way to buy some food for myself and child with this timely supply, and was there overtaken by a young woman, who told me she belonged to my sister, who having given her a wink after I went out of the shop, she guessed it was designed as a command to find

find out where I lived, and therefore had followed me.

I soon satisfied her curiosity, and then enquiring into the temper of my brother-in-law, which alarmed me for my sister's happiness; she told me, ' she had never seen him so out of humour before. That it was easy to see he was of a very jealous disposition; but her mistress's conduct was so extremely prudent, that he had never had an opportunity of taking offence; and the entire confidence he had in her, and his sincere affection for her, got the better of a warmth natural to him; so that by the excellence of her behaviour, and the sweetness of her disposition, no married people lived more happily together; and she attributed his treatment of me to a sort of jealousy, which made him dislike my having any intercourse with his wife, as he imagined me not so prudent.'

I could not from my heart blame him, but said, I hoped my future conduct would plead my excuse; and expressed the fears I really felt, lest my going there should occasion any uneasiness between him and my sister, or make her unhappy by awakening her affection for me.

' Oh! Madam,' said the young woman, ' it would admit of no awakening; for my mistress is continually talking of you, and weeping over your remembrance, whenever my master is not present; for he does not like to hear her mention you. Some time ago she sent me into the street where you did live, to enquire after you, but the account I received was such as increased her affliction.'

" What was told you?" said I.

I do not know how to answer you,' replied she, ' but I was informed you was gone to a bad house.'

" I was

“ I was indeed,” said I; “ but not knowing-ly : However blamable I have been, there I am sure I deserved compassion ; and whoever knows all I have suffered, if they are not strangers to pity, will forgive me my faults, in consideration of the punishments they have brought with them.”

The good-natured girl could not forbear joining her tears with mine ; and perhaps curiosity would have detained her longer, could she have hoped to have learnt any particulars ; but she must have seen I was not in a condition to talk much, and I was in haste to return to my child, and carry him some food ; tho’ he stood not in the same need as myself, for I had had a little bread left, which I gave him that morning, and that sufficed for a tolerable meal.



C H A P. XI.

Oh ! that I had my innocence again ;
My untouch’d honour ! but I wish in vain :
The fleece that has been by the dyer stain’d,
Never again its native whiteness gain’d. WALL.

THE same young woman came to my lodging the next day : tho’ it was a wretched hole, it pleased her by its cleanness. My poor little boy she admired extremely, but I could not help feeling distressed, at having reason to be ashamed of a child, of which so many great families would be vain ; but his charms could not wipe off the infamy of his birth ; an infamy, which, in justice, belongs only to the parents.

As soon as we were seated, she delivered me a letter from my sister, wherein she acquainted me,

me, ' That she could no longer find any comfort in plenty, since she might not impart it to me. That as all her stock in trade belonged to her husband, she could not without being guilty of a criminal injustice, attempt to appropriate to herself any thing out of what she sold ; and that as her expences had always, by choice, been very small, it was but little she should be able to assist me with at present, as her husband would be watchful ; but that she hoped in a month or two he might have me less in his thoughts, and then she should find the means of supplying me more suitably to her own inclinations.'

This was mixed with expressions infinitely kind, and very valuable, as coming from the sincerest of hearts. She had, I found, never been used to ask him for any money ; when she bought any thing, the bill was brought him, and he paid it, and would have done so with pleasure, if it had been a much greater sum. If she had any immediate call, she took it out of the produce of the shop, and in settling the account, told him what it was for. There was such entire harmony between them, that this became her custom, as the easiest way ; but now she regretted it extremely, and yet knew not how to break through it.

I saw her difficulty plainly ; it was insurmountable, and I had nothing left me but to intreat her to run no hazards for me, for that nothing could recompense me for causing the least uneasiness between her and her husband.

She desired me not to write, lest the letter should fall into his hands, and told me she should venture at nothing more than a verbal message, till she had brought him into a better disposition towards

towards me : so in compliance, my answer was only by word of mouth.

Few questions were requisite to inform my sister's messenger of my great poverty, so she staid not long.

From time to time she visited me, bringing such little relief as my sister could secretly bestow, but what scarcely sufficed to pay for my lodging. However, this was a great consolation to me; for, little as the expence might sound, it was a heavy burden on me, who neither had any thing, nor the means of gaining it; and my landlady's spirit made her require to have a week's pay in hand, not chusing to give so short a credit. Nor could I blame the woman; for where they are forced to let their rooms to such indigent persons as I was, if they were not to be rigidly exact, they would never receive their rent.

My sister's situation being now added to the other impediments which prevented me from obtaining any support, I was reduced below hope: Willing and able to work, and yet to starve for want of employment, seemed a hard fate, but touched no heart but my own. In this extremity, the humanity shewn me by a stranger in the street, determined me to try if casual charity would afford me any relief; and in the bitterness of my soul, I set out with my child to ask the charitable benefactions of passengers.

But here my success was small: I found that beggars had a society amongst them; that the town was divided into so many shares, and to every one was appointed their particular district, from whence they drove every interloper, by means too formidable for me to contend with, who feared almost equally their oaths and their more forcible methods. Thus I had no places left me, but such as were so little frequented,

they were not thought worth their notice. Like the first planters in a colony, they divided amongst themselves all but the barren lands.

Among the few who passed where I durst attempt to beg, I seldom obtained any thing but reproaches for my idleness, in begging at an age when I was so capable of working. It was to no purpose that I told them I desired nothing so much as work, and intreated them to try me, by giving me any employment. They would answer, ' That they saw I was newly entered ' upon that trade, and it would be a shame to ' encourage me in it, as then I should never leave ' it off.'

Sometimes I should be so fortunate as to obtain a few half-pence from people whose compassion got the better of their reason, and who durst not give me an absolute refusal, for fear I was indeed as near starving as I said I was. But these small and uncertain benefactions would not preserve two persons alive, tho' used in the most sparing manner. Sometimes for two or three days I should not procure a farthing.

One time, when I was thus reduced to the last extremity, myself almost starved, and my child in the same condition, and piercing my heart with his cries; as the last effort, I dressed myself neatly, and went out to try if I should have any better success, as a higher degree of beggar; and left my poor boy with an old woman in the same house, who used to take care of him in my absence, tho' she was too poor to relieve his necessities.

I attacked many of my own sex, who told me they never gave to begging gentlewomen: I then addressed myself to the other, and received a refusal from the first; the second told me if I
would

would go with him to the next tavern, I should be satisfied with his generosity.

I answered him, that he mistook my purpose; the smallest alms would content me, but that I could not leave that street. This occasioned some altercation; each kept to their resolution, till at last he produced five shillings to my view to strengthen his arguments. A sum, then, in my estimation, so considerable, at length prevailed.

I returned home to my famished child, as soon as possible, carrying food with me, that I might receive some reward for money so ill gotten; and I confess my recompence was great, in seeing the dear babe, almost at the gates of death, revive as he eat, and the smiles of joy by degrees take place of the anguish which the pains of hunger had imprinted on his lovely face.

I preferred the trade of begging so much to the making a traffic of my person, that I endeavoured by pursuing it to make this little fund hold out; but without success. I was at last attacked by the beadies, who receiving no gratuities from me, declared they would execute the rigors of their office if they saw me there again. Thus the little liberty I before had in this occupation was much restrained, and my gains sunk to almost nothing.

The only consolation I had, was the hope that my sister would be suffered to countenance me so far, that by her recommendation I might obtain some employ; but every time her messenger came, disappointment accompanied her. But still I hoped on, and was often led by it to the utmost extremity of famine, till, no longer able to support it, I resolved to try the means which had once succeeded, when I did not aim at it. How often, shocked at the odiousness of my pur-

pose, have I turned back, determined to suffer myself to die, rather than preserve my life in such a manner ! But when I returned home, and saw the distress of my poor child, every other evil appeared light in compassion of his sufferings ; and I again fled from the anguish I felt at the sight of him.

I seldom had far to go before I met with some gentleman, who, tho' hard-hearted to my distress, would be indulgent to his own vice. I often thought the cleanly simplicity of my dress, (for I had no ornaments) pleased more than the tawdry decorations of the women who generally follow that course ; for while a man courts our vice, his reason hates our impudence.

I was sensible that, by entering into a society of prostitutes, I might gain a settled subsistence ; but I could not think of engaging in a way of life I detested : I still hoped some means would at last relieve my necessities, and that I should not always be reduced to a prostitution, to which I could not bring myself to consent, till the severe pains of hunger, and the still sharper pangs I endured from those my heart's darling felt, got the better of the little delicacy I still had remaining. There could not be a more sparing manager than I was of what I gained, as, while it lasted, I was freed from a course most odious to me.

C H A P. XII.

Want is a bitter and a hateful good,
 Because its virtues are not understood :
 Prudence at once, and fortitude it gives;
 And, if in patience taken, mends our lives.
 For ev'n that indigence that brings me low,
 Makes me myself, and Him above, to know:
 A good which none would challenge, few would
 choose,

A fair possession, which mankind refuse. DRYDEN.

IN this manner I lived for near three months; the sobriety of my behaviour at home giving no suspicion to the people where I lodged, who were not used to be over-curious in prying into the lives of their lodgers, which perhaps would seldom bear a strict scrutiny. I concealed it equally from my sister; sensible, that if she knew it, the desire of bringing me out of such infamy and suffering would drive her to any extremities, to the hazard of all her conjugal happiness. The vexation I had given, and still gave her, was one of my strongest afflictions; therefore I could not, for any consideration, make her a greater sufferer.

One day, when I was reduced so low that I had not sufficient to purchase a supper for myself and child, my landlady came up to my room, and invited us to drink tea and sup with her, it being her birth-day. Never did a royal birth-day give such joy to the vainest lady. I doubt whether the birth of a child ever was more welcome to the person most anxious for an heir, than this good woman's anniversary rejoicing was to me. We readily obeyed her invitation; and I was too

well pleased with the entertainment, to criticize the conversation of my company.

A little before supper, a man entered, who said he was just come from the new *Hospital*, so he called it, and that every thing was now completely finished; but he fancied it would be a long time before it was full.

‘Do not talk of it,’ said my virtuous landlady: ‘I have no patience with the gentlemen who give encouragement to such wicked wretches: Starving is too good for them.’

I, who knew so well what starving was, thought this was almost too cruel a sentence for any crime; and begged to know who the wretches were the spoke of.

I was answered with all imaginable plainness; and felt, that coarse as the name was, I had too good a right to it; and therefore was enough concerned in the conversation to enquire what gave my landlady’s virtue such offence.

I then first heard of this blessed charity: I made all necessary enquiries about it; and could scarcely contain the joy I felt, at the smallest hopes of being one of the objects that should be relieved by it.

Sorrow had robbed me of many nights rest; joy had a good title to a tribute I had so seldom paid it: I could not shut my eyes that night; and the next morning, as soon as I thought the Secretary’s Office would be open, I went thither; not without fears that my child would be a bar to my admission; for I had heard of no provision being made for children.

My good fortune was without allay: I was not only accepted, but was told I might come the day but one after, and my child should be taken care of.

To

To form an adequate notion of the rapture I felt, a person should have been reduced to the same excess of misery. My soul overflowed with gratitude, and my countenance shone with joy. It is true, I found I must part with my child; but then I could have no doubt but he would be far better taken care of than I could ever expect he should be while he depended on me. For his sake, I could part with him; and should find a constant consolation for the loss of him, in thinking how well he would be educated and provided for.

The satisfaction of my heart was so visible, that at my return home, my landlady enquired what had made so great an alteration in me, for she had before often taken notice of my melancholy; and used to tell me, she wondered what could make one so young, and so pretty, look so dismal. I once told her very frankly, that being so young and so pretty were the very things that made me so: But this I found was a riddle to her, which I did not chuse to explain; nor did I now think proper to acquaint her with the real reason for the alteration she observed; but informed her, that within two days I was to go to a good place, which I had obtained that morning.

I wrote a letter to my sister, acquainting her where I had applied for an asylum, and of the success my application had met with; and added, that I hoped a course of regularity would so far wash out the infamy from my reputation, that her husband might in time suffer me to see her; which would always be necessary to my happiness, but could never contribute to it, till she was at liberty to act in that respect according to the dictates of her own heart, without the least

chance of giving offence to the man on whom her happiness then depended.

This letter I gave to my landlady, the morning I left the house; desiring her to deliver it to the young woman who used to come from my sister, the next time she called there. And then I delivered my child where I was ordered; which I confess cost me many tears; for the tenderness of the mother got the better of true maternal love, which should have made me rejoice in this separation. That severe pang being over, I came hither, and was received with a degree of humanity beyond my expectation. I expected relief; but I found from this good matron tenderness and pity, of which I was then the only object; but a very short time increased the society, and rendered her humanity more extensive.

Thus you see, in compliance with your desire, I have exposed all my crimes and follies; and given a strong proof how much evil one bad action draws along with it. Nor was I sensible of my wickedness when I applied to be received into this place: I sought it as a refuge from distress and misery; my heart grieved, but did not repent till I came hither, where I was shewn my sins in their black colours, and, awakened to repentance by a sense of guilt, was taught to apply for pardon to Him who came on earth to save sinners.

The society returned their thanks to Emily, for indulging their curiosity. She told them they could in no way so agreeably acknowledge it, as by following her example: which being readily promised, it was agreed that they should proceed in the order in which they arrived at the House. A good expedient to avoid ceremony. How often have we seen some such method necessary to adjust

just the ceremonial between people who have no title to place or precedency, nor can pretend to claim any so good as a priority of reformation!



C H A P. XIII.

Should some brave Turk, who walks among
His twenty lasses, bright and young,
And beckons to the willing dame,
Preferr'd to quench his present flame,
Behold as many gallants here,
With modest guise, and silent fear,
All to one female idol bend,
Whilst her high pride does scarce descend
To mark their follies; he would swear,
That these her guard of eunuchs were;
And that a more majestic queen,
Or humbler slaves, he had not seen. WALLER.

THE person who, according to the regulation agreed upon, was to have the precedence in talking of herself; a valuable privilege! was about three-and-twenty; tall and genteel; her complexion was brown, but her features good, and her countenance animated with a pair of the finest black eyes imaginable, which shone with a vivacity that distress could not extinguish. She began as follows.

My father was a very rich trader in a country town; and known to be so substantial, that it rendered him one of the principal people in it; an advantage of which I partook: For a tradesman's daughter is as much raised above others who are included in the same class, by a little superiority in wealth, as a lady of quality is by the

priority of her ancestors admission among the nobility. I had two brothers: and a sister a few years older than myself, who had but one eye, and was besides lame of a leg. She had sense enough to see she was not made to be admired in public, and therefore placed her ambition in shining in domestic life. Like most girls, she had been taught to think marriage the ultimate end of her creation; and that woman was made for man, in a more humble sense still than our first mother, who had the person for whom she was designed, ready to receive her as soon as created. My sister looked on this as the peculiar privilege of the first of the species; and that all her female descendants were to wait till that superior sex should please to accept them; which might never happen at all.

As she was sensible she must not expect their passions to be her friends, she placed all her battery against their prudence; and by her æconomic virtues, hoped to conquer that entirely. The fortress she attacked was not strong; but unfortunately, when taken, the town was little nearer surrendering than before.

When my sister observed the preference my person procured me, she comforted herself with considering that it might gain me many lovers, but perhaps not one husband; and paid so great a compliment to male reason, as to believe that one eye, which was always directed to some wise employ, must, by a man who thought of marriage, be held in higher estimation, than a pair of the brightest eyes wandering in search of admiration; and that one leg, which hobbled constantly in the road of æconomy and notability, was preferable to any two that were ever gadding abroad to places where flattery abounded.

For

For my own part, my prudence was less, and my conceit greater. I could not suppose, that so admirable a being, as I then thought myself, was made for any secondary purpose: But I did not trouble my head much whether I was made for man; I was sure lovers were made for me; and when once, by reducing them to assume that character, I had deprived them of all pretence to superiority, I concerned myself little what high ideas those which were indifferent retained of themselves: I left them to find charms in my sister's humility and good housewifery; and did nothing but carry myself to places where I might be seen; which appeared to me the ultimate end of my being.

The first beauty in a country town would be rather envied than despised by many fine ladies, if they were acquainted with all the gratifications her vanity receives. To be universally acknowledged as the prettiest woman in the place, preferred by all the men in it, and addressed by every stranger who happens to arrive there, is a very flattering circumstance: And as I make no doubt but many of my sex have as much vanity as Cæsar had ambition, if they knew the life of a country beauty, they would sooner choose to be the first woman in a small town, than the second in the most populous metropolis. Divided sway never yields entire gratification: When a woman has a rival in admiration, she is subject to many mortifications, and is kept in some degree of order by the fear of being supplanted: She is forced to controul her insolence, and stifle a thousand caprices, which, to one who is under the extremest intoxication of vanity, afford much gratification.

This was my way of thinking at that time, when vanity, unrepressed and unmortified, possessed

essed my whole soul. I had no competitor, and felt myself of as great consequence, and with as much reason, as she who with conscious dignity struts about Bedlam with a straw scepter and paper crown, convinced that she is the sovereign of that place. Where-ever I went I was attended by all the idle young men of the town; for every rank and every place affords a great number of those who are such by nature, or are easily made so by the first pretty woman, who, hanging out the colours of a professed beauty, shews them where they may repair, and be sure of an obliging reception: For such an one values her charms in proportion to the number, not the merit, of her followers.

But what greatly increased my train, was the situation of the town I lived in, which was but a very few miles from one of the Universities: This seminary of learning, as it is generally called, is much more certainly a nursery of dangles. The boys will travel some miles to see a pretty woman, if the town wherein they are situated is not well supplied. Their vacant minds and unemployed eyes want amusement; and they find more in gazing at a girl who has ever so few charms to boast, than in searching in Homer for a full description of Helen's beauty. While they are young, no labour is too great that is spent in pursuit of a woman, whom their imagination has dignified with various attractions; and when they grow old, tho' they are become less volatile, they are not less dangles: But the time which before was spent in hunting a beauty, is now passed in a more lazy admiration, the scene of which is the fair one's shop.

By the advantages of this situation, no lady of the first rank, both in birth and charms, ever had a larger train of admirers; and perhaps few have

have made a greater progress in the arts of coquetry. The first part of the business of every day was adorning my person ; for a beauty will not, any more than a Persian monarch, appear without the outward circumstances which add to her lustre.

“ For beauty, like supreme dominion,
“ Is best supported by opinion.”

And she who would maintain the character of her charms, must endeavour to render them at all times, and to all people, equally resplendent. The task is laborious ; the heroine who rants her hour upon the stage, finds some consolation in descending to common life ; and she who more humbly personates the pert chambermaid, after the curtain is let down, may return to social and serious converse. The theatrical statesman is not confined to a life of politics, nor the stage coquet to an endless repartee. But those who on the greater theatre of the world assume any character, even tho’ of a trifling sort (for I cannot exalt very highly those of a wit or a beauty) have condemned themselves to never-ceasing labour. She who will always dazzle with the charms of her person, or surprize by the force of her genius, without allowing the least indulgence to sickness, indolence, or stupidity, is a slave to that vanity which she thinks exalts her to a kind of empire. Even the sun does not shine with unabated lustre ; clouds will often eclipse his glory, and sometimes very nearly extinguish it ; what then can reasonably expect to dazzle with uninterrupted resplendency !

No one has more reason to know the fatigues of being a beauty, for no one laboured more industriously in the calling than myself ; and I have

have returned home so entirely weary of the labour that I had gone through, in exhibiting all my charms; sometimes confining my spirits, that, by conversing gravely, I might wear an awful dignity on my countenance; at others, in spite of a depression on my spirits, affecting vivacity and mirth, to shew the brightness of my eyes, and the various dimples in my cheeks; I have, I say, returned home so tired with acting a part quite contradictory to the turn of my mind at that time, that I do not know whether I should not have given up my profession, and, laying aside the beauty, have turned a rational woman, if my sister had not, when she fancied, by my gravity, that I had met with some disappointment, been always ready to pique my pride, by telling me, that

*Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover;
Fades in his eye, and palls upon his sense;*

With every thing else to the same purpose with which her reading could furnish her. Nor was she always content with quoting all she could find in poetic authors suitable to her desires, but would borrow from divine writ; and when I had got the better of all her verses by an inundation of lines that contradicted hers (for which I could not be at a loss, as poets have generally been of my side of the question), then she would confute me by Solomon's authority, and tell me 'that 'favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain:' Nor could I silence her by observing, that, vain as it was, it got the better of Solomon's wisdom: Self-love fixed her opinion so firmly, it was not in my power to bring her over to mine.

This sort of opposition would revive my wearied spirits; and to shew her the power of beauty
was

was not of so very short duration, I would again commence my labours, to renew its triumph.

However, intoxicated as I was with the worst fever of the brain, that of vanity, I was sensible I had no great share of beauty to boast. I knew how much obliged I was to my situation, which placed me near so many young men, who were ever seeking for something to admire, and satisfied with small success; and that I was not a little indebted to nature, in having been most niggardly in dispensing charms among the rest of the young women in the neighbourhood.

I saw many old gentlewomen, who convinced me, that had I been born a generation earlier, I should scarcely have been looked at: But all this I kept secret within my own bosom; for I plainly perceived, that the imposing air of a beauty goes a great way towards causing a person to be esteemed such: The world is so obliging, or so indolent, it seldom disputes our title to what we seem confident we are in possession of.



C H A P. XIV.

Happy the innocent, whose equal thoughts
Are free from anguish, as they are from faults.

WALL.

I N this giddy round of vanity I passed near three years, without, in any degree, disproving my sister's opinion; for tho' I was flattered by thousands, was sighed to by great numbers, pestered with verses by all the small wits of the University, and attacked in sober prose by many who could not coin a rhyme, or had not poetry enough in them to fill up a *bouts-rimés*;
yet

yet I had not one who offered to venture into wedlock with me : Nor could I wonder at it, for I had not vanity enough to think my appearance promised much conjugal felicity. But at last, a young gentleman of the University made more serious addresses to me.

This gentleman, by name Mr. Monkerton, was agreeable in person and understanding ; but what particularly distinguished him, was an easiness and gentility of air and manner, which is so seldom found in very young persons at those places. He seemed to have studied the present age more than the past ; and tho' he might give less satisfaction to his tutor, than many of a more bookish turn, he was much properer to please a woman, as he could render his conversation agreeable by other means than that of flattery ; the only merit to which most of my admirers could pretend.

Nor was Mr. Monkerton much less qualified to please by fortune ; he had a good estate, and no father ; that insurmountable obstacle to a young girl's marrying to advantage, who has no dower but her personal charms. He was indeed yet under the power of guardians, being a minor ; but as he was above nineteen years of age, their authority could not last long ; and his allowance was very ample.

I had reason to believe Mr. Monkerton's views were not at first so serious. He was in reality captivated ; I could perceive that he did not follow me from idleness or fashion, but because he could not bear my absence. He was as constant as my shadow, and as near me too ; for he always took care to be next me, whatever number at his first approach he found in his way.

His knowledge of the world made him think that a vain girl of my rank was attainable on
easy

easy terms by a man of his fortune: This gave him that degree of assurance which seldom turns to a man's disadvantage with our sex; who are too apt to be less charmed with modesty, than with a freedom of manner, which gives them better opportunity either to signalize their own good behaviour, or to furnish them with an excuse to lay it aside.

I confess myself one who was pleased with Mr. Monkerton, for being void of that aukward bashfulness which I saw in most of his age. He soon perceived he was preferred to all his rivals, and did not intend to leave what he thought so promising a circumstance uncultivated. After having performed the duties of a public courtship as long as he imagined my vanity could require, he began to solicit for private interviews. I soon penetrated his meaning; which made his solicitations for some time prove fruitless. I had virtue, and its necessary companion decorum; both of which were offended with the thoughts of an assignation: But he pressed it so long, and with such earnestness, that my pride was piqued; I could not bear he should think a private meeting was of so much consequence; he shewed he thought me very frail; and I was apprehensive, that, by the obstinacy of my refusal, I seemed to have as low an opinion of my virtue as himself.

From this motive I resolved to endeavour to lessen his importance, and raise myself in his opinion; and accordingly gave him leave to come and see me one day, when I knew my father and sister were engaged at some miles distance. To have granted him a meeting at any other place, would have been an impropriety of conduct, which might have argued too great a levity, however

however prudently I had behaved when I was there.

I see you all tremble at this step of mine, and think my pride is going to humble me; but not at all: My lover found this interview was not worth so much solicitation. He lost much rhetoric, swore many oaths in vain, and found all Love's artillery of sighs, tears, and vows was not sufficient to answer his expectation.

When evening came; he was obliged to leave me, without obtaining, as he thought, any other advantage from his visit, than the satisfaction of having entertained me some hours uninterrupted, with all that his passion could dictate; but, in reality, he had much increased mine: His tenderness infected me; I had not half loved before; I knew not till then the pleasure of being beloved; my vanity had been more engaged than my heart.

To the impression Mr. Monkerton had made on my affections, was owing my not discarding a lover, whose views I so plainly saw through. I had fancied myself of too much importance to be thoroughly sensible of the superiority which rank and fortune gave him over me: This imagined equality increased the offence; but my heart pleaded for the offender; nor was my vanity quite silent: I was not without hope, that when he saw how much he was mistaken, his passion might conquer all his reasons against matrimony. I plainly perceived how much the advantages in such an alliance would be on my side; tho' I thought it no more than what I was intitled to by nature.

He obtained leave to make me so many tête à tête visits, as served to convince him that there was no chance for succeeding in his views; and at the same time to increase his passion as well as mine.

mine. He grew melancholy, and kept at College for a week, without coming to see me.

This touched me extremely ; but pride came to my aid, and enabled me to give him a worse reception, for what he thought might have induced me, by additional kindness, to recover a conquest which I seemed in danger of losing.

This was too painful a piece of self-denial for him to practise it again, when it had proved so useless ; and therefore, after professing his esteem to be equal to his passion, and declaring himself charmed with a virtue which had baffled all his hopes, he assured me he could find nothing in an everlasting union with me, that would not be the most ardent wish of his heart, if it was in his power to proclaim me for his wife ; but that he was left so much in the disposal of his guardians, that he could not marry publicly without their consent ; but that, if I would agree to a private marriage, when he came of age, I should see how much it should be his care to recompense me for my condescension.

I was not a little pleased with hearing Mr. Monkerton propose wedlock to me, tho' I did not like the terms. I endeavoured to persuade him that a year would soon pass away, and that he would then be at liberty to do what he chose, without any restraints : I offered to discard every other lover ; to change my way of life ; to be always at home ; and always happy to receive him, as there could be no doubt but my father, proud of the honour he intended him, would be glad to make so short a delay as little irksome as possible.

He exclaimed at my cruelty, in calling a year a short delay, to a passion so ardent as his ; and to say the truth, I had belied my own heart in that expression ; therefore was the more ready to suppose

suppose it insupportable to him. But a private marriage was an odious sound : I valued the reputation of virtue, as highly as the inward satisfaction arising from it ; and knew not how to sacrifice it, even for a year. I was sensible how difficult it was to wipe off a blemish from any thing so tender ; it is scarcely possible but some stain will remain behind. All this I represented in the strongest light, but met with no answer, but accusations of want of love : He represented, that he relinquished all prospect of increase of fortune, and of great alliances, for my sake, and that I would not endure one year's obscurity for him. My reputation, he added, by marriage became his ; it could receive no blemish that would not be reflected on him ; and it would be as much his interest as his duty to make my virtue conspicuous ; which, like the sun, might be a little overshadowed, but could never be totally eclipsed.

But the most prevailing of all the things Mr. Monkerton could urge to bring me to a private marriage, was a declaration, that if I persisted in my refusal, he would go abroad ; for he could better bear to be separated from me, than to drag on a life thro' a tedious year of expectation.

The best arguments reason could have suggested, had it all been on his side, would not have availed him so much as this menace. My heart could not bear to part with him ; nor could my vanity support the thought of losing a marriage so much to my advantage. I had scarcely any principles of action left, but love and vanity ; how then could I resist, when both were on the side of my adversary !

And yet the conditions were hard ; for Mr. Monkerton required I should go off with him, without informing any of my family of the true state of the case ; because, he said, their pride
would

would hint our marriage to so many, if they did not publicly proclaim it, that would come to his guardians knowledge. Many assurances of the strong proofs of our union, which he would give to my relations, as well as to all the world, as soon as he should be of age; with the most flattering prospect of the splendor in which he would then bring me to visit them; were requisite to make me consent to such mortifying terms; nor would I leave my father's house, but on condition that he should give me the strongest contract imaginable, till we were married; and that we should set out so very early, that we might arrive at London, where the ceremony was to be performed, before the canonical hour was past.



CHAP. XV.

Hail, wedded love! Mysterious law! True source
Of human offspring! Sole propriety
In Paradise; of all things common else. MILTON.

EVERY thing being at last agreed upon, I stole out of my father's house very early, with trembling steps, and a more trembling heart, and went to the inn, where I was to meet Mr. Monkerton; who was not so cold a lover but he was there before me, and had got a chaise ready, which carried us out of the town directly, and proceeded with great speed to London.

I could not leave the place where I had so long lived, and which contained most of my relations and friends, without many tears. Mr. Monkerton said all that love could dictate, to make me easy; not without success; I loved him too well
not

not to find great pleasure in the happiness which every word and every look expressed ; and at last I grew happy too ; but it was rather a tender than a lively joy ; some melancholy would remain, but such as gave me an appearance of more softness, not of less love, than before I had taken this rash step.

We were carried directly to the Fleet : I was an entire stranger to London, and knew not what bad repute this place was in ; but it did not seem a fit resort for happiness : However, to avoid all delay was so necessary a point to me, (after having put myself thus into the hands of a young man, whose honour I had reason to believe arose only from having found it necessary for the success of his passion), that I made no objections : We were married there ; after which, I gave up my contract, as being of no farther use ; and we drove to the other end of the town in search of lodgings, and were soon accommodated.

My heart began now to be a little at peace ; I was married to a man much my superior, from whom I might in a short time expect to have my reputation restored, and to be placed in a rank far above my birth ; in the mean time, might hope that mutual love would yield me more happiness. If all brides were so reasonable as to depend on love for their felicity only for one year, fewer disappointments might arise from marriage. But, I am afraid, I was not so very moderate in my expectation as my expressions would signify ; for my hopes of reciprocal affection extended to as great a length of time as those of the most unreasonable of my sex ; but for the first year it was all the satisfaction I could expect from my new state.

When my fate was once fixed, I endeavoured to see it only on the brightest side. My spirits were

were by nature remarkably good, and I had never met with any affliction to weaken them. This disposition enabled me to chase from my thoughts too great anxiety for my reputation; and, instead of it, to dwell on the joy I should receive from clearing it up to the world, at once vindicating my virtue, and doing honour to my charms.

Mr. Monkerton's fondness for me filled up my time; for when he was not with me, I wanted no employ, but to recollect every tender assurance he had given me of his love; and mine, thus indulged, increased daily. But, tho' every hour seemed productive of happiness, yet I could not forbear wishing to hasten the steps of tardy-footed time, in order to get to the end of my year of obscurity and shame, tho' it never sat heavy on my mind, except when Mr. Monkerton was obliged to go to College; which he sometimes thought it necessary to do, as a blind to his guardians: But these absences were very short; and it was necessary they should be so, for my days hung very heavy on my hands when he was away. I could not bear to go abroad, because I knew I must be looked upon as his mistress.

This change of life, from a desire to produce myself "where most might wonder at nature's workmanship," to be afraid of shewing myself to any eyes but Mr. Monkerton's, could be rescued from extreme dullness by nothing but love. When he was away, my spirits would sometimes sink, from reflecting on the great alteration in my mind; that I, who used never to be seen without being admired, could not now stir out of my house without being covered with shame: But my consolation was, that every day brought me nearer the end of this distressful circumstance.

Mr.

Mr. Monkerton often endeavoured to prevail on me to go abroad with him, and was the more urgent, as my confinement in some degree impaired my health : But herein he was unsuccessful; all he could obtain, was, that after it was dark, I would often walk round a neighbouring square with him for an hour or two.

The house we lived in was very elegant, and my cloaths expensive ; for Mr. Monkerton was lavish in his presents, and took great pleasure in adorning me : In every particular our appearance was genteel, but few were witnesses of it. I could not have kept any company, which I should have thought suitable to me ; and I would accept of no other ; nor would I be put on the footing of a mistress to his acquaintance ; and therefore he admitted few to his house. Two or three gentlemen, who were his more intimate friends, he introduced to me ; and these were often with us, which served to enliven the conversation, tho' it did not render it always more agreeable ; for people who love much, are apt to be more desirous of avoiding other company than in prudence they should be ; since interruption, if mortifying, serves to render each other's conversation more delightful, by giving them an impatience to be at liberty to enjoy it.

At last the time came which delivered Mr. Monkerton from all tuition ; that so much wished-for year of twenty-one, which sets a man of fortune free from all restraints, at an age when the passions are generally the strongest, and consequently least under the guidance of reason. But so the law ordains ; and when a man is most unfit to govern himself, he is set at liberty from every governor. Nor did I want to lengthen the term, having impatiently longed for the end of Mr. Monkerton's minority.

I did

I did not fail to remind him of his promises the day after that which declared him major; but he put me off with pretences of difficulties in settling accounts with his guardians, which would engross all his leisure for a little time, and make it impossible for him to declare his marriage with so much éclat as he could wish; but as soon as that was over, assured me he would do every thing I desired.

It was now winter; Mr. Monkerton's guardians were in town; and as every time he was absent, he said he was with them, I had reason to hope, however intricate their affairs were, so unwearied an application must soon clear them up: But new difficulties I was assured were continually arising; and Mr. Monkerton told me, that it was very disagreeable to him to be so frequently pressed on a subject with which he could not at that time comply; and gave him reason to believe that I either doubted his honour or his truth; and he should take it as a favour if I would say no more till he was able to keep his word, having often given me sufficient reasons why he could not do it then.

It is true that the intricacy of his affairs was often alledged to me, but as no immediate hopes were given me of their being settled, I could not be free from apprehensions that this was a mere pretence. I had endeavoured to persuade him to lay aside the thoughts of the éclat with which he talked of proclaiming me as his wife; desiring it might be done only in such a manner as the business he was engaged in would permit, and to leave to time its being generally believed. I was willing to resign all the gratifications of vanity, and desired only to be rescued from shame and infamy. But these petitions, which justice would have allowed me to ask with less humility, were

become offensive; and Mr. Monkerton told me, with great indignation, that my pride would conquer his affection, and that my great haste to be acknowledged a wife, would make me lose a husband.

These were grievous menaces to a woman who asked as a favour, what she might demand as her due; and who valued nothing so highly as her reputation, except the man to whom she had made a temporary sacrifice of it. I was awed into silence, and waited with apparent complacency, tho' with inward impatience, for two months longer, without once urging my request: But hearing nothing on the subject in all that time, I broke thro' the restraint I had laid on myself, tho' not without fear, and expressed my desire of knowing how his affairs went on, in the mildest terms.

I was heard with good humour, and thanked for having avoided the subject so long; and an intimation was given me, that to this was owing my being listened to with civility: I was assured, 'that the most difficult points were settled; and that I might depend on his diligence for determining the whole as soon as possible, tho' not so soon as he wished, for the nature of the dispute made it tedious; but that my prudent silence would facilitate the dispatch, as teasing him rendered his mind wholly unfit for business; and he hoped I would shew my confidence in him, by being quite easy and passive in that particular; for nothing was so great an incentive to generosity, as being generously treated; therefore I could not doubt, by such behaviour, of securing to myself what from him was only justice.'

In this manner I was partly intimidated, and partly whedled into silence, till three months more

more were elapsed. The town grew empty, and my suspicions increased daily. When I considered that Mr. Monkerton had been brought to marry me only from finding all his hopes frustrated of gaining me upon easier terms, I had reason to fear that he might design to keep clear of the incumbrances of marriage as far as he was able.



C H A P. XVI.

A generous fierceness dwells with innocence;
And conscious virtue is allow'd some pride.

DRYDEN.

ONE evening, as I was sitting with Mr. Senwill, one of Mr. Monkerton's friends, who was waiting for his return home, and who seldom seemed dissatisfied with my company, I was so absorbed in my melancholy apprehensions, that the conversation flagged extremely; and he, walking about the room, took up some letters, which had come by the post for Mr. Monkerton; and looking at them, asked me, if I ever saw a worse hand than Mr. —'s, shewing one of them to me. This Mr. — was the chief of Mr. Monkerton's guardians. I answered, that the hand was indeed a vile one; but it could not be that gentleman's, for it came by the post; and shewed him the mark of York upon it; whereas he was in London.

Mr. Senwill told me, I must be mistaken in that particular; for Mr. — had been at his country seat near two months.

This startled me extremely ; but I persisted in my assertion, that I had heard Mr. Monkerton mention having just parted with him, and three other gentlemen, whom I named, and who were Mr. Monkerton's other guardians.

' I have been in doubt,' said Mr. Senwill, ' for an hour past, whether you were not asleep ; but I am now convinced of it, for I find you dream. One of the gentlemen you mention has not been in town this year ; another came only to deliver up his trust to Mr. Monkerton, and returned directly into the country ; and the others, upon my honour, have long ago left London.'

Struck to the heart with this information, I started up, and said, with great emotion, " I have indeed been long asleep, and dreadful is such an awaking ! " and walked about the room in an agony that astonished Mr. Senwill, who knew not the importance of what he had said.

He came up to me, and taking hold of my hand with tender concern, asked me what he had said or done, that could have so cruel an effect upon me. And upon my refusal to explain myself, he omitted no intreaties to prevail upon me to satisfy his curiosity, which, he assured me, did not arise from impertinence, as I might easily imagine from the silence he had always preserved concerning some puzzling appearances in my connexions with Mr. Monkerton, which he had never attempted to pry into ; but that he saw himself so much the cause of the emotion I was in, that he should be wretched till he knew how he had been so unfortunate as to give pain to one, whose peace and happiness were dearer to him than any thing on earth.

I per-

I persisted in my refusal; but told him, if he would make me any amends for the uneasiness he had given me, he must tell me where the gentlemen we had been talking of lived in London.

Mr. Senwill 'wished he knew the reason of that request; but since nothing but implicit obedience was allowed him, he would shew, by his readiness to obey me, how sincerely he was attached to my service, if I would but accept his most faithful endeavours to remove the disquiet he had innocently occasioned.' He told me, that only two of the gentlemen had houses in town, to which he gave me a particular direction; but the other's stay was so short, he knew not where he was during that little time.

Tho' I spoke but little, yet, in the agony of my mind, I uttered something that shewed resentment against Mr. Monkerton; from which Mr. Senwill suspected that jealousy was the occasion of my uneasiness, tho' he could not perceive how it should be excited by any thing he had said; and very generously told me, 'he believed I suspected his friend of some inconstancy; and that he thought himself obliged, in justice to him, and compassion to me, to assure me, that he could answer for my having no rivals.' Much to this purpose he urged to little effect, as my suspicions were levelled more at his honour than his love: But at last I told Mr. Senwill, that I should take it as a favour to be left alone, and should be glad to see him when I was more fit for company. With unaffected concern he left me: My heart thanked him for his pity, of which I felt myself a true object.

I had no reason to doubt the truth of what Mr. Senwill had said: I had suspected him of a stronger attachment to me than was consistent with his friendship for Mr. Monkerton, tho' till

this might he had never said any thing to give me room to form that opinion : But he was ignorant of the use which had been made of those gentlemen's names ; and if he had known it, the man who could generously endeavour to remove the jealousy he suspected me of, would not have made a bad use of it.

I was sensible of the impropriety of shewing a bad opinion of my husband to any man, but especially to one who I thought did not look on me with indifference ; therefore I chose to send him away, and venture alone to the houses where he had directed me, tho' it was now dark. Accordingly I went to each, with all the haste that anger, impatience, and a whole army of passions could inspire me with ; and there had the account which Mr. Senwill gave me, confirmed.

I returned home, filled with resentment, despair, and contempt for the man who had stooped so low to deceive me ; and found him there, full of surprize at my being abroad. It was so strange a circumstance, that he knew not how to take it, and was prepared to be angry ; but in so small a degree, when compared with the indignation which actuated me, that it soon subsided, till it was turned to another subject.

I told him, without much circumlocution, the discovery I had made of his meanness, and how basely he had drawn me into a sort of acquiescence with his delay of owning me for his wife.

Mr. Monkerton at first endeavoured to soothe me into forgiveness ; but finding it all in vain, and that I now insisted highly on the justice he had so long evaded ; he asked me, in a surly manner, ' If I would have him own me for what I was not ? '

" That, "

"That," I told him, "he had too long done; therefore I expected he should now own me for what I was, and publicly acknowledge me his wife." He replied, 'that I, who was so much offended at a breach of truth, could not require him to publish such a falsehood.'

This manner of treating me almost turned my brain. I asked him, 'What he could mean by it? He could not deny me to be his wife!' "Indeed," replied Mr. Monkerton, with an affected coldness, "thanks to the law, I am not married; therefore can have no wife!"

I could not forbear exclaiming at this speech, 'When, by all laws divine and human, we are married, what law can set you free?'

'The Marriage Act, my dear,' answered the monster; for such he now appeared to me: 'We were neither of us of age; and therefore no marriage between us could be valid, without the consent of our friends.'

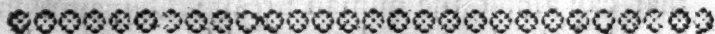
It is impossible to describe what I felt on this occasion: I was a prey to almost every passion that can afflict the human breast: Despair alone would have been a state of bliss, compared to what I endured: The tumultuousness of my passions increased my anguish: I had heard the Marriage Act talked of, but had never attended to the purport of it; nor did I believe it could affect the validity of our marriage.

Mr. Monkerton did not think my company inviting, nor chuse to trouble himself with fruitless endeavours to make me credit what I was obstinately bent to disbelieve: So telling me, 'that he should pass the night where he could hope for quieter rest,' he left me; and about a quarter of an hour after, his servant brought the Marriage Act, with his master's compliments,

and that he had sent it for me to peruse, for the clearing up of my doubts.

The cold insolence of this message almost rendered me incapable of examining into the truth of what Mr. Monkerton had asserted; but at length I composed my spirits enough to read it, and there found the fatal truth too certainly confirmed.

Had virtue only actuated me, the integrity of my own heart would have given some degree of composure to my despair: I might then, in silent tears, have wept my fate; and, from principles of truth and justice, despised, and calmly hated, the wretch who had thus betrayed me into shame and infamy. But pride and vanity had too great a share in my heart, and turned despair into desperation. I passed the night in ravings and exclamations, more like a frantic than an afflicted woman; and could not be prevailed upon to go to bed; nor durst my maid leave me, fearing my distraction might lead me to some desperate course.



CHAP. XVII.

O honour! frail as life, thy fellow flow'r;
Cherish'd, and watch'd, and hum'rously esteem'd;
Then worn, for short adornment of an hour;
And is, when lost, no more to be redeem'd!

D'AV.

THE agitation of my mind at length exhausted my spirits; and, like children, I cried myself to sleep, on a sofa where I had laid me down, without expecting any such interruption of my sorrows; for I cannot call it a refreshment;

freshment; having, after about two hours rest, waked only with greater power to grieve. Nature had gathered strength by that little cessation, and lavished it, like an unthrifty fool, as soon as obtained.

In this condition I passed three days, alternately a prey to despair, to rage, and grief: But by the fourth, my body was grown so weak, with the agonies of my mind, and want of food (for I had not been able to eat any thing,) that a languor seized me, which not only affected my outward frame; but deadened my mental faculties. This was a real relief; tho' my melancholy was extreme, yet by this means it became quiet, and I was less violently afflicted for knowing better why I was so.

I looked on my ruin as irretrievable; Tho' I could not accuse myself of want of chastity, yet I was not free from just cause of self-reproach. I now saw that I had been as regardless of my happiness as of my duty to my father, when I had been prevailed upon to transact an affair of so much importance without his advice; and that it was great imprudence to suppose I could receive any detriment from the person, who, of all the world, must naturally be most anxious for my welfare.

When I first married, I wrote a letter to my father, requesting his pardon, and telling him, that in a short time I hoped to appear less criminal in his eyes.

To this I received no answer; but comforted myself in thinking that my great exaltation would procure my forgiveness. This expectation was now over; and I could not support the thought of carrying my infamy among all who loved or envied me. Tho' I had no guilt to reproach myself with, but that of disobedience (a heavy

burden indeed to a delicate conscience ; but yet does not bear that badge of infamy which is stamped on other crimes), I could not expect such lenity from the world, as to have my innocence allowed without any other proof than my word. Many people are ready to believe any ill of one person, if that belief does not tend to the justification of another ; but when it does, they become charitable and good natured, and will credit but half the evil, that they may lay the remainder on the other party, and so humanely blame two instead of one. This I take to have given rise to the declaration, by which many think they shew a candid and impartial humanity, that there must be faults on both sides. As Mr. Monkerton's extreme villainy in a great degree made my excuse, I had all reason to expect that most people would believe that no man could be so great a villain.

Shame is often very inconsistent with itself, and makes us do what we ought to be most ashamed of. The only prudent step I could have taken, was, to have gone home to my father, and endeavoured every means of prevailing on him to receive me ; but shame, as I have said, prevented me : And tho' prudence is oftener looked upon as a branch of wisdom than of virtue, yet she who offends against the one, is in great danger of swerving from the other.

I had as strong a sense of virtue as pride can give : I felt it so necessary to my happiness, that the mere imputation of vice made me give myself up for lost to the world, and to myself ; since I was lost to reputation. I saw no glimmering of hope to be rescued from infamy ; but, with a dramatic poet, agreed, that when a woman has once sacrificed her fame,

- ‘ In vain with tears the loss she may deplore ;
- ‘ In vain look back to what she was before :
- ‘ She sets like stars, that fall to rise no more.’

I did not perceive the difference between virtue and reputation ; and that I might preserve the one, tho’ I could not regain the other ; but felt myself totally deprived of every comfort, and my passions all subsided into a settled despair.

Mr. Monkerton and Mr. Senwill had both often called on me, when I was not capable of bearing the sight of the one, or conversing with the other ; but after some days repeated refusals, the former prevailed on my maid to admit him. His appearance roused me out of my lethargy of grief ; my passions began to rise ; and he found I had more resentment remaining than he imagined I was then capable of, from the account he had received of me.

The design of Mr. Monkerton’s visit was to prevail with me to become what I had so long appeared, and live with him as his mistress, which he represented as the only part that remained for me to act ; called what he had done excess of love, and promised every indulgence that could make me happy.

To presume thus on the love he imagined I must still entertain for him, and on the deplorable-ness of my situation, was a fresh insult, which he found I was capable of resenting. I from my heart detested him for his baseness ; and, with truth, told him, that beggary and famine would be more eligible to me, than any further intercourse with him.

The only satisfaction I had received from the moment of the fatal discovery of Mr. Monkerton’s treachery, was from seeing him really touched

touch'd at my resolution. However, he flattered himself, that as my anger subsided, this might alter; and he well knew that my pride allowed me no resource, after so mortifying a circumstance; and therefore renewed his solicitations, both by letter and by speech, whenever he could obtain admittance, but to little purpose; my hatred was founded on my strongest principle, pride; and therefore was unconquerable.

When he saw the power it had over me, he was extremely afflicted; he wept, beseeched, used every means to move my compassion; and I never saw a greater wretch than he appeared when he found me inexorable: Upon which, deprived of all hopes, he determined to go abroad; and actually did so, as soon as he could equip himself for his journey.

Mr. Senwill had likewise obtained permission to see me as soon as I was able to bear conversation; and from his I found some relief, for it was filled with all the tokens of compassion; he wept with me when I wept; he joined in my rage against Mr. Monkerton, with unaffected detestation of his proceedings; and I found had dropped his acquaintance, from the time that he learnt his treatment of me.

The tenderness of a friend is always pleasing, but never so much as when distress deprives us of all other comfort. Mr. Senwill's principles appeared such as merited my esteem, and his attachment engaged my gratitude. With him I could lament over all the horrors of my situation, and ask his advice about the means of rescuing me from them.

In this point alone his friendship failed me; for he did not assist me in any expedients, but constantly offered his fortune to my acceptance, with an air of such disinterested generosity, as gave
me

me pleasure, tho' it could not procure my acceptance. He all the time professed only the tenderest friendship, avoiding every expression of a passion, with which he had reason to think I was in no very good humour.

When Mrs Monkerton took leave of me, the day before he set out for Dover, from whence he was to proceed to France, he offered me the continuance of such part of his income as would enable me to live as I had done since I belonged to him, if I would gratify him with the acceptance of it, which he had the better hopes of, as his image was not stamped on his money. This offer I totally rejected: Destitute as I was of support, I could not accept it from one who had so grievously injured me.

The money I had by me served for my maintenance for about three months; during which time I lived upon it, irresolute in what way to fix the future part of my life; but when it was almost spent, I found it necessary to take a speedy resolution, and consulted Mr. Senwill on every scheme which offered itself to my mind, tho' I had little reason to expect much assistance from him; for, as I have already said, he always appeared more at a loss than myself: But the distressed and the irresolute oftener consult a friend in order to gain a good excuse for talking of their grievances, than from a desire or expectation of receiving much benefit from their advice.

Mr. Senwill had done little more than increase the difficulties which presented themselves to my view, on every thing I thought of undertaking, till he found my circumstances required some immediate determination. He then began to profess a passion, which, he said, he long had stifled, and would have still concealed, rather than have run a hazard of my thinking him too self-interested,

terested, if he could have prevailed on me to suffer him to supply me with an income suitable to the way of life I had been used to; but since a too delicate generosity made me obstinately reject his offers, he would shew me how to render him under eternal obligations to me, and at the same time free myself from all my difficulties.

He assured me he would do all that was in his power to raise my blasted reputation, by treating me as his wife, and consenting to my assuming his name. All this he urged with a sincerity of love, which affected me, who was full of esteem for him; and, by having continually drawn his compassion into a comparison with Mr. Monker-ton's cruel treachery, had conceived a high opinion of him. But I could not listen to such a proposal without very humiliating reflections, at seeing how much I was sunk in the world, to have them made me with so little ceremony.

These drew tears from my eyes, which Mr. Senwill wiped off, with an air which spoke the softest tenderness and pity; and had, I believe, delicacy enough to guess from whence they sprung, for he avoided asking me the cause; but allowing something to the last struggles of that pride which I called virtue, he mixed some tears with mine, and, from partaking of my melancholy, made himself a pretence for becoming more tenderly familiar.

Tho' I was mortified at Mr. Senwill's presuming to make me this offer, yet I could not be offended. Innocent as I had been, I could not expect he should think of marrying a woman who had nothing but infamy to bring him; and if he had been so generous, or so weak, which-ever you please to call it, as to have harboured such a design,

design, he had a father, who would have been a sufficient impediment to his putting it in practice : And I have often thought since, that as he knew all the workings of my mind, he must see that pride, which now was robbed of all opportunity of taking the shape of virtue, would lead me into vice.

When a woman receives such proposals without anger, compliance is seldom far off. I saw a means of avoiding all the difficulties, which had occurred in my various schemes ; and that only by contributing to the happiness of the man who seemed so interested in mine ; whom, tho' I did not love with all the heights of romantic passion, yet I esteemed with a tenderness which was more rational, and likely to be not less satisfactory. Virtue and reputation were to me synonymous terms ; I therefore looked upon myself as much lost to them as I ever could be ; and like, I believe many of my sex, thought, that after being once entered into that way of life, it was impossible to go back, as if a point of honour had obliged me to fulfil the expectations which my former conduct might naturally have raised.

A lover is not in danger of having a very tedious cause to plead, when his mistress strengthens his arguments, by such reasons of her own. Mr. Senwill was not many days in obtaining my consent to all he had offered, and I became in reality what I before only appeared ; and, what was odd enough, seemed now to some, among whose faults incredulity could not be numbered, to be what I before thought myself, A wife.

C H A P. XVIII.

Oh! When this tyrant doubt torments our breast,
Our thoughts, like birds, who, frighted from their
rest,

Around the place, where all was hush'd before,
Flutter, and hardly settle any more. OTWAY.

MR. Senwill's behaviour won my whole heart, which did not pique itself upon being incapable of ever admitting a second object of its affections; and as I was grown desperate in the point of reputation, I no longer made myself a prisoner, but kept such company as I could, and went to public places in a moderate degree, tho' with less satisfaction, as Mr. Senwill could not venture often to accompany me there.

One night that I was peculiarly happy in Mr. Senwill's being with me in the gallery at the play (for we went into that part of the house, in order to avoid being seen), I heard somebody come in with more than ordinary bustle, and sit down behind me; which tempted me to turn round, and my sister proved the person. I started with surprize; but much greater was her emotion, filled with horror, as she said, to think she was near so shameless a wretch; and gladly would she have fled, for fear of contagion; but the rows behind her had filled so fast, that she could not get away.

I saw no one with her but a youth, who was 'prentice to my father when I left him, and could not be out of his time. This excited my curiosity; and I expressed my surprize at seeing a person of her great prudence without any other companion.

* Surely,

“Surely, replied she, ‘a woman cannot be in better company than with her husband: I wish you were in any so creditable.’ “Your husband!” said I; “How can that be? I am sure my father could never consent to such a match.”

“Well,” answered my sister, “if he did not consent, I have, however done no harm; for marriage is holy and honourable too: I wish no one of his family had done worse.”

Mr. Senwill pitied my situation, and told her, he would not dispute the merits of her husband; but he confessed he rather took it ill, that she should imagine he did not make her sister as good an one; for he thought it his duty to make his wife happy, and had done all that lay in his power for that purpose.

Tho’ my sister had so much feared to be contaminated by sitting near me, her situation began now to be rendered more uneasy by envy, than it was before by her virtuous apprehensions; and she could not bring herself to speak to me afterwards: While she thought she had the advantage of matrimony over me, she could bear the superiority of my appearance; but when she believed us on an equality in that particular, it became insupportable.

As I could not engage her in conversation, I got Mr. Senwill to put such questions to my new brother-in-law, as should gratify my curiosity; and he, young enough to be vain that a woman of discretion had fallen in love with him, was more communicative; and we learnt, that she ran away with him, that they were just married, and were endeavouring to obtain my father’s forgiveness, and to be received by him.

It would have been cruel not to have pardoned the consequence of so high a value for his sex,
and

and a despair of meeting with a reward for so much prudence, whose recompence had been long enough delayed to alarm her apprehensions with a possibility that it might never arrive.

I lived with Mr. Senwill in great tranquility, full of confidence in his love, his generosity, and his honour. He possessed a delicacy of mind, and a gentleness of manners, which rendered him peculiarly amiable. He suffered for every mortification I received, and was delighted with every incident that gave me pleasure. I had, I believe, less passion for him than I had felt for Mr. Monkerton, but much more tenderness. The one had captivated my fancy, and amused my mind; he had charms enough to overbalance the faults or follies I saw in him, but still I perceived them. But my judgment applauded all my sentiments for Mr. Senwill; without intoxicating my fancy, he gained my whole soul; my attachment to him was of a more serious sort; it gave a gravity mixed with tenderness to the whole turn of my mind, and rendered it more suitable to his; which, free from the flights of youth, was steadily fixed in the paths of honour; and except his frailty in regard to myself (and this, instead of then appearing a crime in my eyes, was, if not his first, yet his most endearing merit), I believe he never performed an action, which was not directed by honour and virtue. This testimony is due to an integrity by which I suffered; but suffered without repining, acknowledging the justice of my fate, and esteeming the cause of my uneasiness still the more for having inflicted it upon me.

In Mr. Senwill's society I enjoyed such a sober uninterrupted happiness, as deadened in me the sense

sense of reputation ; and I almost ceased to regret what I considered as irrecoverable.

My servants seemed to believe me really married ; they saw nothing in my behaviour or manner of life to make them doubt it : I was not too indulgent, in order to blind their eyes to my failings, nor mean enough to wish to make them feel their inferiority, by adding weight to the burden of servitude : I made them neither my companions nor my slaves ; but enabled, by the happy composure of my mind, to preserve a just medium, I treated them as persons to whose happiness it was my duty to contribute, without putting them out of their sphere. I imagine nothing was more conducive to my gaining their good opinion than this behaviour ; for women who are casually placed in a station superior to their expectations, and in which they are supported only by vice, are apt to be ' vain of a little brief authority ;' and for fear they should not be known to have persons under their sway, they become their tyrants.

I had a few acquaintance, indeed as many as I desired ; they were people fit for the companions of a tradesman's daughter, but not for Mr. Senwill's wife. People of condition were not so easily imposed upon ; therefore I could not expect to be admitted into their society.

In this manner about a year had passed, when Mr. Senwill began to appear melancholy and uneasy ; a change which much alarmed me. I often enquired into the cause, but for some time without success ; till, no longer able to resist my importunity, he acquainted me, that my brother-in-law, at his return into the country (upon the strength of what he had said in answer to my sister's insolence, which he could not bear, considering himself as the subject of her reproaches),
had

had spread the report of our marriage so universally, that it had reached his father's ears; who enquiring narrowly into our way of life, was equally disturbed with the fear that we were really married, or that his son had entered into engagements, which he looked upon in a light more serious than the rest of the world.

I could not but be very uneasy at finding Mr. Senwill's father was apprised of our connexions: I knew how much his son respected him, his high sense of the duty owing to a parent, and the more particular reverence which his peculiar virtues demanded; and therefore was sensible that while the father was offended or uneasy, the son could not be happy.

Old Mr. Senwill is a man of uncommon integrity; of manners as gentle as his son's; tenderly affectionate, wisely indulgent to his children, mild to their frailties, but rigid to their vices; a man of great sincerity, and strictly religious. His paternal affection, which prevented his ever being angry with his children, rendered him liable to be extremely afflicted with any fault in their behaviour: He was much interested in their temporal welfare, but inexpressibly anxious for their future happiness.

This amiable disposition could not fail of meeting with a most affectionate return from such a son, who feared nothing so much as giving his father pain. He knew that caprice or ill humour had no share in the direction of his father's actions; tender parental love was the sole motive of every thing he said or did; and his son repaid him by every thing that filial affection could dictate.

Sincerely as Mr. Senwill loved me, I do not believe he would ever have ventured to enter into any connexions with me, if he had thought there

was much danger of its coming to his father's knowledge, who had for some years retired into the country; and was brought to London only by the report of his son's marriage with a woman of ill fame, which had disturbed the peace of his retirement.

I knew not what to expect from this event: I had no doubt of Mr. Senwill's love, and knew that he thought his honour in some measure engaged to me, and was sensible of the sincerity of my attachment to him: These were strong ties; but could scarcely be more potent than his obedience and his affection to his father. Which would get the better, I knew not; nor was it of great consequence; for I saw that if I was conqueror, still he would never be happy, while he thought he was acting contrary to duty and gratitude. It was almost as great a misfortune to me to see him uneasy, as to see myself forsaken: Every way I had nothing but unhappiness in view.

Mr. Senwill's tenderness seemed to increase with his melancholy; his love was never more apparent, but always accompanied with a visible distress of mind; and every token of affection from me, which used to give him so much pleasure, now put him into agonies of despair. I often begged him to give vent to all his thoughts, which I knew not how to interpret; but he as often told me he could not express his sensations, nor communicate all his afflictions. By these expressions I learnt to fear evils beyond what I already suffered.

C H A P. XIX.

What have we gain'd by this one minute more ?
 Only to wish another, and another ;
 A longer struggling with the pangs of death.
 Oh ! Those that do not know what parting is,
 Can never learn to die. ————— OTWAY.

I Passed some months in this state of suspense, suffering much, and fearing more ; but was at last cleared of all my doubts, by a visit from one of Mr. Senwill's friends, deputed by him with a message, which he could neither write nor speak to me himself.

This gentleman acquainted me, that about two years before, a match had been negotiated between Mr. Senwill and a young Lady of large fortune, whose person and disposition were perfectly amiable ; and her regard for Mr. Senwill so visible, tho' veiled under great natural modesty, that every body expected it should much endear her to him. In consequence of this disposition in his favour, her father had proposed the match, tho' her fortune was superior to what Mr. Senwill could possibly expect. His father had been greatly pleased with it, and accepted it readily, not supposing it possible his son should be averse to an union with a woman so infinitely desirable.

The young gentleman was sent for down, and told, that every thing was agreed upon ; his father having often heard him speak of her with the greatest esteem, and having some time before fancied he saw a partiality in him towards her. And thus far he judged rightly ; while Mr. Senwill

will had no other attachment, he liked no one so well; but tho' she had pleased his reason, she had not enslaved his fancy, which was reserved for one less deserving.

He received his father's summons after his passion for me commenced, tho' he had then no expectation of meeting with a return, or any thought of declaring it; with-held by a sense of honour, while he looked on my affections as the property of his friend. But yet he could not think of marrying another woman; especially one who, he was conscious, deserved the whole possession of a heart, which he had not to dispose of.

It was difficult for a man of Mr. Senwill's politeness and humanity to decline an affair so far advanced, especially when he was not ignorant of the regard the young Lady had for him; but he was too firmly determined, not to effect it; and his father's indulgence would not suffer him to insist on what he had engaged in, tho' his honour and his inclination strongly interested him in it.

When the old gentleman found his son's attachment to me was so strong, and had inquired enough into my past life to have even a worse opinion of me than I deserved (for he neither knew the whole of my case, nor had any partiality to plead in the behalf of my faults); he was fully bent on dividing us. He met with more opposition from his son than he imagined him capable of giving to any thing he so much desired. He knew the strength of his son's reason and dutiful affection so well, that he did not suppose it possible they should be conquered by passion. But he found it easier to make him wretched than passive; he saw him miserable; but he discovered that he still visited me, and despaired of preventing

preventing it, unless he could bring his honour and humanity on his side. To effect this, he intreated him to consent to his renewing the negotiation with the young Lady, whom he had before refused.

To this Mr. Senwill was more averse than ever; and it was his father's continual solicitations which had occasioned the extreme distress he had appeared in. But at last the old gentleman making this the only means of giving him any ease of mind, or of gaining his pardon for his son's offences, and representing to him the melancholy effects which the love of him had had on the young Lady whom he rejected, who ever since had been in a decline of health and spirits, which deserved the more compassion from him, as she had been led into liking him by an appearance of his partiality for her; these arguments, continually urged to him, at length determined Mr. Senwill to sacrifice his own inclination to the will of a father, whom he thought he could never sufficiently obey. And by this gentleman he sent me this intelligence; tho' he could not part with me without one last farewell, but knew he should not have courage to tell me it was to be for ever.

This circumstantial detail was, in part, designed to break my misfortune to me the more gently; and to render it supportable, was concluded with assurances of Mr. Senwill's everlasting esteem and gratitude, which no change of circumstances could extinguish; and with a promise, that he would wait on me the next day.

The shock was great to part with a man whom I loved with reverence (for such was my affection for Mr. Senwill), and to be left again without support or comfort. But I was prepared by the expectation of some great evil, and was so wretched

wretched at seeing his distress, that nothing but such an event could render me more so. My passions, which had once been so outrageous, were now softened by previous sorrow; besides, I had nothing to move my anger; and grief, unaccompanied by any other passion, will not cause impatience.

I perceived what I had to expect, before the gentleman had advanced far in his story, and tears came to my relief: As he proceeded, the torrent increased, and they calmed my soul; and perhaps my sorrow was more easily confined within the bounds of patience, from the fear I had of losing some part of the narration.

I found this gentleman had been desired to use every argument of consolation: He urged all he could think of; but what a cold heart utters with indifference, can have little effect on one which is tormented with the most poignant grief. When he found the small success of all he said, and that I gave as little ear to his philosophy as Romeo does to the Friar's, which he holds entirely unavailing, as it cannot make a Juliet; he left me, without receiving the acknowledgments due for the trouble he had taken; but those who are, 'With themselves at war, neglect the shews of love to others.'

I found I grieved more from the fear of losing Mr. Senwill's affection, than for the loss of his society, or his fortune. To see him, was necessary to my happiness; but to be loved by him, seemed requisite to my existence. Herein I received some consolation the next day.

With what impatience did I wait for the hour, when I might expect to see Mr. Senwill! Impatience mixed with fear; a joy, as it approached, blended with sorrow. My mind was a complica-

cation of contradictions. He came as he had promised, ' But, Oh ! that meeting was not ' like the former !' With steps as hasty and unequal as the beating of my fluttering heart, he came up-stairs ; but when he entered, and saw me like a spectre, with scarcely life or motion, he threw himself on a couch, in such an agony of grief, as roused me from the state I was in ; and, neglectful of my own sorrow, I sunk on my knees at the side of the couch by him, endeavouring to soothe his affliction. But this attempt only served to increase it ; and above two hours passed before either of us was capable of any utterance, but sighs and tears : I continuing in my posture, weeping over him ; while, with his arms round me, he clasped me to his bosom.

The desire of lessening his sufferings, by concealing part of my own, enabled me to be the first who broke thro' this scene of silent woe : I begged him to compose himself, intreated him not to grieve for me, who, I imagined, was the chief object of his affliction ; for I could never be wretched if he was happy ; which I trusted he must be, with a woman so much worthier than myself, and with the satisfaction arising from a consciousness of his obedience to the best of fathers.

But while I was telling him, that the contemplation of his felicity should be my consolation, my look and manner so contradicted my words, that my despair and grief were never more strongly painted ; and little amendment appeared in us the whole day (for he spent it all with me), except that we grew able to express our wretchedness.

He sent an excuse to his father, who expected him in the evening ; for he was very unfit to be
seen

seen by any one, and utterly incapable of conversation. But in all our discourse, nothing afflicted him more sensibly, than my obstinately rejecting a settlement from him: He had brought one ready drawn up, and intreated my acceptance, with such earnestness, as the only consolation he could receive, and the only means of his enjoying a moment's peace of mind, that nothing could have made me capable of a refusal which appeared so cruel, but consideration for his happiness.

I was too well acquainted with his generosity, not to foresee this circumstance; and therefore had reflected upon it, when he had not, by his importunity, the means of rendering me incapable of judging. I was afraid, that if such a thing came to be known, as in a length of time it in all probability must, it would give cause of discontent to his wife, who would not easily be persuaded that he had never seen me after his marriage; and I could better support any distress, than a thought of occasioning the least uneasiness between him and his wife.

No consideration of less consequence could have enabled me to resist. He assured me that the sum was no greater than he might with justice dispose of; for he should restrain his own particular expences within such bounds, that his share of their fortune could not be thought above his due, tho' his wife would bring the greater part of it; and that he should lose all esteem for her, if he thought she would desire him to behave otherwise to a woman who merited so much from him; or, if she could wish to deny that one gratification, to a man who sacrificed all the happiness of his life to her.

Tho' I was unconquerable in my resolution in this particular, I could not refuse to promise

that I would accept what money he had by him; which he insisted on sending me, when he had no hopes of prevailing in his other request.

He informed me, that he was to be married the day but one following; for he had been desirous of having a day to recover himself, after taking leave of me, that he might be the better able to go thro' the solemn ceremony, which would oblige him never to see me more; at least, till age should have robbed us of our passions, and of the charms which excited them. This opened to us a prospect, which we then seized as our sole consolation, and promised a constant remembrance of, and esteem for, each other; and that, when that happy period should come (for such it then appeared to us, as we thought that age could take nothing from us, which would not be far more than compensated by the restoration of each other's society), we then might meet again, and converse as free from guilt as from scandal.

But tho' this seemed some consolation, yet it could not enable us to take so long a farewell without an agony of grief, which greatly prolonged it. Many times we said, Adieu! before we could think we had taken absolute leave of each other; and whenever we had, we found the suffering so great, we agreed to defer it one quarter of an hour: By these delays the night was far advanced, before Mr. Senwill could prevail on himself to go; and when he did, he was obliged to the assistance of his servant, or he could not have got into his chair.

C H A P. XX.

Our life is short, but to extend that span-
To vast eternity, is virtue's work.

SHAKESP.

AS for myself, my situation was beyond the power of description; pardon the tears which the recollection draws from me: My grief was intense, but not bitter: I admired the man who had inflicted it, if possible, still more than ever; I loved him better for being thus forsaken by him; and I had one satisfaction which accompanied every thought, that he still loved me to excess. Tho' I had lost his conversation, I preserved his affection: This was a resource, in which my heart found relief from despair, tho' not from regret.

I had desired Mr. Senwill not to send me the money he insisted on my accepting, till the day after his marriage; that I might have an opportunity of enquiring how he had supported his spirits. Accordingly on the appointed day, the friend, who had before been with me, came and delivered me a pocket book, wherein he said the sum was inclosed.

My thoughts were so much more employed on the giver than on the gift, that, instead of opening it, I enquired after Mr. Senwill's health; and learnt from his friend, that he was not able, till the evening of the day after he was with me, to wait either on his father or his mistress; that the former excused it, knowing the struggle in his heart, and was sufficiently thankful to him for conquering his inclinations at all: The latter

knew not the cause of this seeming neglect, which he attributed to illness, and with great truth, for the body cannot be well when the mind is so ill at ease. She had, during the whole negociation, perceived a melancholy in Mr. Senwill, which had given her some apprehensions: she thought him but little of a lover; but the affection which made her feel it the more sensibly, inclined her to over-look it, and rather to seem ignorant of it, than run the hazard of an explanation, which might be worse than doubt. She plainly saw, that he beheld their approaching marriage with coldness; but she trusted to his honour and humanity for being well used, and thought his generosity would not return indifference to the love he would perceive she had for him, and to her constant endeavours to please him. With most men this would have been but a frail dependance; but with Mr. Senwill it was infallible.

They were married, as had been agreed upon; and the gentleman, who brought me this intelligence, accompanied Mr. Senwill, from the time he rose, to the end of the day; and was one of their attendants at church. He told me his friend got up with such a depression of spirits, and so fixed a melancholy in his countenance, that he was alarmed, lest he either should not have resolution enough to go thro' the ceremony, or that his appearance would cast a damp on every heart. But that, after conversing together about two hours, and summoning every argument to his aid, he assumed an air, which persons inclined to look on the side most agreeable to themselves, might think rather solemn than melancholy. He had endeavoured by dress to give a chearfulness to his general appearance;
and

and thus fortified, with all the resolution he could summon to his assistance, they went together to the bride; whom they found elegantly beautiful; her dress not gaudy, and her countenance not devoid of fear, which Mr. Senwill's coldness had raised.

They soon proceeded to church, and there, as well as the whole day, his friend behaved with as much cheerfulness as he could expect, tho' he saw frequently such struggles in his mind to keep up any tolerable degree of it, as filled him with apprehensions, lest he should at last lose all command of himself; and with compassion for the lady, who he feared might see thro' it, as he plainly perceived old Mr. Senwill did, whose parental tenderness shone in his countenance; where pity for what his son suffered was blended with joy, in the prospect of happiness, which he flattered himself was opening before him, when his first melancholy was worn off.

Tho' every particular of this narration went to my soul, yet I listened greedily after it; and never votary put up a more ardent prayer than I did for the happiness of this marriage; for what I wanted in devotion towards the Being I prayed to, was made up by love to him I prayed for.

This gentleman left me a direction to him, begging, that if ever it was in his power to serve me, I would without scruple apply to him. This, he said, he owed to Mr. Senwill's friendship, who had desired him to grant me any protection or assistance I should find requisite; but that, independent of such a request, the esteem which, from my behaviour and his friend's good opinion of me, he had conceived for me; his sincere compassion for what he had seen me suffer; and the title nature had given me to every regard from

his sex, would have made him ardent in offers of his services, as nothing could yield him greater pleasure than to be so employed.

I promised, if ever I saw occasion, he should hear from me; and after he was gone, and I grew composed, I opened the pocket-book he had brought me, and, to my surprize, found it contained bills to the value of 600 l. but what was to me of much more worth, with them was a letter from Mr. Senwill.

I could not forgive my want of curiosity, which had so long delayed my receiving this blessing. I felt new life flow into my heart at the sight of his hand, and opened it with rapture and impatience: It contained all that words can express of kind, generous, and noble, with such deep distress, that I forgot I was a sufferer to grieve for him; but I was called off to some attention to myself by the latter part of it, wherein he told me, ' That the only thing which could
' have prevailed on him to leave me, was having
' his conscience convinced that we lived in sin;
' and that all the alleviations custom had taught
' him to alledge, were fatal deceptions. That
' this afflicted him more for me than for him-
' self; for he was not able to bear the reproaches
' both of his conscience and his love; for having
' drawn in, to be partner of his guilt, the person
' whose welfare was dearer to him than any thing
' on earth. That he could not mention this cir-
' cumstance in his message, nor when he saw
' me, fearing I should look upon it as a reproach
' for my past conduct, which in him would have
' been highly unjust; since he was conscious that
' the crime was all his own: that I was in no-
' thing to blame, but for my too partial opinion
' of his honour and integrity, two qualities to
' which

‘ which he could no longer pretend any title,
 ‘ since they had not prevented him, who found
 ‘ me innocent, tho’ unhappy, from taking ad-
 ‘ vantage of my distress; and, because I was ex-
 ‘ posed to shame, leading me into guilt; which
 ‘ would be an eternal cause of sorrow and repen-
 ‘ tance to him.’

He then told me all the arguments his father had used to convince him of his crime; pointed out every text of scripture which declared the guilt and punishment attending it; wondering how he, who had in other things, entirely acquiesced in its authority, could have been blinded in these particulars, by such poor evasions as the world makes use of to excuse the irregularities of which they are guilty: and added, that, had not this consideration far out-weighed his filial duty, his father could never have had his compliance to boast of; but he could not support the thought of bringing everlasting misery on her, whose smallest pain gave him inexpressible uneasiness.

He ended his letter with all the tenderest wishes, and the most ardent prayers, that a love, which was anxious both for the present and the eternal happiness of its object, could dictate: And intreated me not to restrain myself in any expences that could give me the least satisfaction; for I might depend on having so constant a supply, that I should never find any deficiency.

Mr. Senwill’s friend had hinted something to this effect; and I now saw plainly, that, altho’ I would not accept of a stipulated sum, fixed even out of the power of the giver of it, and secured beyond his life, yet he was determined to bestow that as a present, which I would not re-

ceive as my due: But this I was resolved to prevent.

The part I have mentioned so particularly in Mr. Senwill's letter made a strong impression on me. My nature must have been very perverse, if he, who had led me into error, could not guide me to truth. I read, I examined the Scriptures as he recommended, and, above all, I continually perused his letter, where the arguments were so strong and clear, that, had my disposition been worse than it was, I could not have withstood conviction; which was facilitated by my having then no inducement to disbelieve truths so evident; for I am inclined to think our incredulity is oftener caused by an unwillingness to comply with the doctrine, than from a want of sufficient light to see the force of it.

The fears which were thus awakened in me for my soul, withdrew my thoughts, more than any thing else could, from Mr. Senwill; tho' I am afraid he was so interwoven with every consideration, that, even in my repentance, I was in some measure actuated by a desire of extenuating his guilt, by making him the means of my conversion.

C H A P. XXI.

An easy quiet, a secure retreat,
 A harmless life, that knows not how to cheat,
 With home bred plenty, the rich owner blest,
 And rural pleasures crown his happiness.

DRYD. VIR.

I Passed a week in this manner, and settled the plan of my future life conformably to it. I determined to convert the 600 l. Mr. Senwill had so generously given me into an annuity; to settle in some cheap part of England, where I should be known only by my future conduct; and there to live in the exercise of Christian duties, to repent of my own sins, pray for him who had been a partner in them, and to endeavour, by all the means in my power, to contribute to the present ease and future felicity of all on whom I could have any influence.

The money I had by me, and the produce of some things which I intended to sell, as foreign to the purpose of my future life, the presents which the vanity of Mr. Monkerton, or the fondness of Mr. Senwill, had made me, I designed should maintain me, while I was seeking out a proper place for my abode, and purchase me what conveniencies I might want there: For this purpose it was more than sufficient, and would, in all probability, allow me a small sum to keep by me in case of exigence.

I had made no secret of my intention to my maid, tho' I did not intend to take her with me,

as I would not have one about me who had my reputation in her power.

As I was at a loss for a place to fix on, and knew no good means of enquiring, I thought I would take advantage of the offer Mr. Senwill's friend had made me, and ask his assistance in the choice of one; and, perhaps, I was not sorry that Mr. Senwill should know a resolution, which I imagined would give him pleasure.

In pursuance of this determination, I sent my maid with a letter to him, and felt some impatience for her return, as I wanted to begin the course I had resolved on, and was not less desirous of an opportunity of inquiring after Mr. Senwill, which I flattered myself I should have, as I made no doubt but his friend would come to me on this occasion. But dinner was brought up, and my maid was not returned; I thought, perhaps, the gentleman was in company, and had made her wait for his answer. This supposition lasted a little time; but night came on, and still no news of her. I had made such frequent inquiries, that a less circumstance would have alarmed my under-maid, than seeing that all her things but one great box were gone, as she perceived was the case, on going into her room for something she wanted. The girl ran to me in a fright, and told me this particular. Tho' I had never conceived the least suspicion of her honesty, this account startled me; I asked if any people of ill appearance had been with her lately. The girl said, that, the night before, a man had called after it was dark, to whom she had given a box, saying, it was a carpenter who was to mend it, for it was broken; and as she was to move soon, it would be necessary to put all her things in repair.

Upon

Upon this I went into my room, to see if my things were safe. My trinkets, and such little things as I designed to sell, had been put off my toilette, out of her great care, as she pretended, from the time that I received notice of Mr. Senwill's design of leaving me, as no longer of use to me, who had then no temptation to dress with any care, beyond what cleanliness required. I went to the drawer where she had laid them, and found it empty. I now was prepared for the worst. I opened my bureau, and could find neither the notes for the 600 l. nor the money I had by me, which I kept in the same place.

I no longer remained in doubt. I saw I was robbed, and knew not any means of recovering what I had lost. I was shocked at this circumstance, but had suffered too many sharper afflictions to be much grieved.

Here again I thought to have recourse to Mr. Senwill's friend, for his advice how to pursue the woman, and sent my only remaining servant to his house, to beg he would call on me; but she brought back word, that he was gone into the country for a fortnight.

To be deprived of all hopes of assistance from Mr. Senwill's friend was a mortifying circumstance: I knew no other person from whom to expect much help. I would not, on any consideration, have applied to Mr. Senwill; and when I reflected on the consequences which would probably have followed my acquainting his friend with my distress, I was no longer sorry that he was abroad, as it would, in all likelihood, have led Mr. Senwill into an expence, very inconvenient to him at that time; for he would have been desirous of reimbursing me.

I con-

I consulted one or two of the most sensible tradesmen with whom I dealt; but what they advised, took up the greatest part of the little money which I happened to have in my pocket, without bringing me any intelligence of what I had lost. I had therefore nothing left me, but to find out some means of providing for myself; the little plan, in the execution of which I had formed hopes of some remaining comfort, being now entirely overthrown.

The only thing that offered itself to my thoughts was service. I attempted several places which I heard of; but the want of recommendation procured me a constant refusal. I could not even venture to refer them to any of my neighbours, since my late situation was too well known to them.

When I found I had no chance for being received as a servant, I tried if I could maintain myself by plain work; but, by enquiry, I understood that my employment this way must be very precarious, so many seeking the same; and, by experience, I knew myself to be so very slow a worker, that, had I been always provided with employment, I should scarcely have been able to have procured myself the poorest sustenance.

Sincere repentance had humbled me; my pride was subdued by religion, which, in every particular but one, Mr. Senwill had been ever instilling into my mind, while we lived together; therefore I was the better prepared to receive all the truths of it. Having now no chance for a support, I wrote to my father, tho' I blushed to think of appearing before one I had so much offended, till I considered, that I had ventured to apply to the General Parent, against whom I had sinned more grievously: Thus encouraged,
I wrote

I wrote my father the most affecting letter which real distress could dictate; but it availed me little; I received for answer, that he disclaimed so shameless a daughter, and would never see me more.

I had conceived great hopes of being accepted by him: To be thus rejected, therefore, afflicted me most sensibly: but I could not blame the severity which wounded me so deeply; I was conscious of my own unworthiness, and that in his eyes I must appear still worse than I was.

Deprived of every hope, I knew not what course to take; till I recollected having heard Mr. Senwill speak, with great praise, of this blessed asylum, for such wretches as myself. Here then I determined to apply, and the hand of pity received me, moved like its Maker by my penitence.

The day before I entered here I wrote a letter to Mr. Senwill; telling him, that he had compensated for perverting of me, by having wrought my repentance, and given me a sense of religion; which, without him, I might never have had; and that nothing should have made me trouble his peace, but my desire to give the ease to his mind, which I hoped it would receive from this information. I added, that I was going into a quiet and pious retreat, where he would share in all my prayers, and be for ever remembered by me.

This letter I carried to his friend's house; and, having found him at home, informed him of the robbery my maid had committed; of my unsuccessful endeavours to provide for myself; and of my last determination. He intreated me not to put this in execution; but I told

told him nothing could alter my resolution ; and accordingly came the next day : and have enjoyed so much content since I entered these doors, that I cannot repine at my maid's dishonesty, especially as she left me Mr. Senwill's picture, which I contemplate hourly with a melancholy, but I hope an innocent, satisfaction.

You may remember, that in the first week after I was admitted, a gentleman came to speak with me ; but not gaining admittance, a letter was brought me, which, as in duty bound, I shewed to the matron. The gentleman was Mr. Senwill's friend, whom he had sent to prevail with me to repair my loss ; but that failing, he wrote to me for that purpose ; entreating me with the most tender and affecting earnestness, to comply with his request ; for that he could not bear to think I should be reduced to live on charity, while he was supported in affluence. He added, that he pleaded herein for his own happiness ; and therefore did not think I would deny him. In short, he omitted nothing that could give him a chance for prevailing : but my resolution was unalterable, with which I acquainted him in such positive terms, as should put an end to all further solicitations ; and since that I have heard no more from him ; but flatter myself he is contented with thinking me happy ; and that all circumstances concur to render him so.

C H A P. XXII.

All born alike ; from virtue first began
 The difference that distinguish'd man from man :
 He claim'd no title from descent of blood ;
 But that which made him noble, made him good.

DRYDEN.

GREAT pains have been taken by philosophers, to discover from whence proceeds the pleasure we receive by having our pity excited : Some have attributed it to the tenderness, others to the cruelty, of our natures ; but neither have confirmed their hypothesis by unanswerable reasons : so that we still pity, and still are ignorant why we do so. But while we participate with the distressed in their affliction, and grieve for their sorrows, we think ourselves free from all imputation of inhumanity, tho' we feel pleasure in our grief, and sometimes delight so much in it, that the observation of one, whose wit seldom spared the frailties of mankind, ' that every one can ' bear the misfortunes of others, perfectly like ' a Christian,' falls so short of the truth, that they might be said, by one sect of the philosophers I have mentioned, to support them like Barbarians.

But I am not inclined to subscribe to their opinion, nor think that so tender a sensation arises from cruelty or pride ; but whatever
 was

was the source, the society, whose biographer I am become, had listened both with compassion and pleasure, and thought the person who had thus entertained them deserved their thanks.

If pride had any share in their pity, it led them not to exult over the failings they commiserated, by comparing them with their own superior merits; the only way it had to exert itself was in rejoicing, not that they were unlike that Pharisee, but that the Pharisee was like themselves.

It is easy to imagine, that, amongst persons whose lives have borne some resemblance, many reflections must arise on every incident related; but as reflections are not the taste of the times, and are indeed too apt to want both spirit and novelty, one of which is at least requisite to make them entertaining, and to have no other property of easy writing, but that they are what any one may very easily write, as it has been defined, therefore I shall not trouble my readers with them, but proceed to the history of the rest, with more expedition than the curiosity of the hearers required.

The next who was called upon, was a very young girl, very pretty, but very little; with so strong an air of simplicity and innocence in her countenance, that it could not be effaced, even by the loss of the virtues which originally had been the cause of it. Her cheeks were often dyed with so beautiful a vermilion, as shewed that nature had bestowed on her the finest complexion imaginable, with so resplendent a bloom, as eclipsed all the efforts of art; but tho' she was still extremely young, yet her constitution was so impaired, that
her

her complexion had shared in the decay, tho' it would occasionally revive. Obedient to the first summons, she proceeded without ceremony, as follows :

My misfortunes began very early. When I was eight years old, I was told, by the person whom I had till then taken for my mother, that I was no child of hers, but that my real parent was of a rank far superior, and gave me this account of my birth, which I might not so well have remembered, had it not been repeated to me several times afterwards.

A lady came down to a neighbouring village, and took lodgings at a cottage, where, after some short stay, she was brought to bed of me. She went by the name of Tent, and was very lavish of her money, rewarding highly all those about her. She was very young, and extremely melancholy ; and generally found in tears if any one went into her room ; watching impatiently for the post, but often disappointed of the letters she expected.

Before she was able to travel, she inquired for a sober good woman, with whom she might entrust me ; and the person I took for my mother, the wife of a poor labourer, was recommended to her, to whose care she gave me, with all the charges which maternal tenderness could dictate ; and agreed to remit her a very large allowance for my maintenance. She parted from me with the greatest agonies of grief and despair ; and, from all appearances, I might have expected to receive every proof of a mother's fondness.

For

For four years the promised allowance was regularly remitted, accompanied with such cloaths as were suitable only to a child of the first rank. But after that time, notice was sent to my nurse, that my mother was dead, and she must abate of the price that was paid her for me.

As I had been hitherto their chief support, this was melancholy news; however they were obliged to acquiesce; but had soon reason to think that the making such a bargain was entirely unnecessary, for they received no pay at all, nor knew where to apply for any.

However, these humane people let me suffer as little as possible by this omission. They fed me and clothed me like their own children; but as they had a great number, and only one person's labour to support us all, it was in the poorest manner. The only difference they made between me and their own offspring, was in treating me with a little more distinction.

The place we lived in was extremely lonely; the people simple and ignorant to an excess: Our employment was spinning, and the only thing we were taught. In this situation I remained a sharer in the poverty and content of those I lived with, till I was thirteen years old, when I had the misfortune to lose the only one whom I could look on as a mother. I lamented her as a parent; for I really loved her as such. Her husband had been in a sickly state of health some time, and was now unable to support his family, without the assistance of the parish; who not chusing to do works of supererogation, sent me

me to that wherein I was born, and whose business it was to provide for me.

As my qualifications were so few, I was a heavy burden to the parish, which was therefore glad to get rid of me on the earliest terms; and having found an old gentleman willing to take me, I was consigned over to her. My cloaths and food were thought a sufficient reward for my merits, and indeed I believe were entirely so; but it was a reward I did not enjoy.

My mistress was an ancient virgin, who had what was called a competence to live on; that is, she had enough to maintain her, provided she half starved herself, and quite starved her servant.

She was, by birth, of a gentleman's family, worn thread-bare by that length of its existence which constituted the sum and substance of all her pride. The little she had, was spent in keeping up the appearance of gentility. She afforded herself a neat lodging, decent cloaths; and would not live without something by way of servant, tho' she could not afford to maintain one. She dressed me tolerably that she might not be disgraced by what she meant should render her appearance more genteel; but, to gratify this pride, she scarcely allowed herself a sufficient share of sustenance tho' of the meanest sort. As for myself, I could truly say, that I lived in the practice of that abstinence, which is recommended to those who would preserve their digestions in good order. I always rose from my meals hungry. To eat till I was able to eat no more, was a piece of gluttony with which no one could reproach

proach me. I had just food enough to keep me always hungry ; a greater degree of fasting, would have damped my appetite : I, properly speaking, eat to live ; for any abatement in my meals must have had mortal consequences.

My business was not well proportioned to my feeding, for of that I had an ample quantity. My mistress piqued herself on the utmost excess of cleanliness ; tho' she was too neat to dirty her rooms, yet they were always cleaning ; besides which, I washed all her linen ; but that scarcely took up so much time as the daily folding it ; for by pinching, plaiting, and stroking, it lasted a long time clean ; and by wiping and brushing, her cloaths were as well preserved.

She was tall and thin, upright to a great degree of stiffness, which her well starched linen, its excessive cleanness, and the prim manner in which it was put on, greatly increased. Whenever I was not employed at home, she sent me about to retale her civilities in the town ; no one was so constant in their inquiries into their neighbours health : If her humanity had been measured by her messages, she would have stood foremost in the rank of the benevolent.

By all this care she kept up a sort of respect, and had the satisfaction of being called Madam Selton, for that was her name, and esteemed one of the *top* people in the town where she lived. A sufficient reward, in her estimation, for greater labours. Then she had the honour of being the standard for fine work, having wrought herself chairs, filled promiscuously

promiscuously with men, beasts, and flowers, in such an admirable degree of perfection, that no small ingenuity was required to know the animal from the vegetable part of her creation. She was the first in the place who exhibited any new sort of work, and had distinguished herself in every way of wasting time and materials that had been invented during the course of a long life.

No part of my business pleased me so well, as that which her civility gave me; for, as she was known to keep no profuse table, people would sometimes take pity on me, and invite me to partake of the superfluities of the house they lived in.

As curiosity runs thro' all stations, the story of my birth became pretty well known; and indeed my mistress was not backward in publishing it, having various inducements; first of all it gave her an opportunity of animadverting on the supposed imprudence of my mother, and the consequences of man's deceit, woman's folly, and the wickedness of both; blessing herself, all the time, that she had preserved herself from female frailty and male art; then there was enough of the marvellous in it, to make it no unentertaining part of conversation; and what perhaps pleased her the most of all, was, that it gave an air of distinction to her servant, which her imagination reflected back on herself. Tho' the virtue of my parents appeared but in a suspicious light, yet their gentility seemed apparent; and she always observed, that it was her principal reason for taking me, 'as she thought it was the duty of people of fashion to do what
' they

• they could for young persons of birth, as
 • that might be an objection to many, who
 • do not love to have those about them that
 • are better born than themselves; and besides,
 • there was a nobler way of thinking in *people*
 • who had *good blood in their veins*, than in
 • *the vulgar*, whose ideas were as mean as their
 • birth.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

